A REMEDY AGAINST TROUBLE: IN A DISCOURSE ON JOHN XIV. 1.

Wherein ſomething is alſo briefly attempted for clearing the Nature of Faith; Of Juſtification; Of the Covenant of Grace; Aſſurance; the Witneſs, Seal and Earneſt of the Spirit. And Preparation for Converſion; or the Neceſſity of Holineſs.

By H. LUKIN.

LONDON:
Printed for *Thomas Cockerill* at the *Three Legs* in the *Poultrey* over-againſt the *Stocks-Market*. 1694.

TO THE READER.

THE enſuing Treatiſe is the Subſtance of ſome Sermons, which I tranſcribed at the deſire of a Friend. I deſigned chiefly a Practical Diſcourſe; and if I have ſometimes fallen upon controverted Points, it is not from any delight that I take therein. I am not of *Abner*'s Temper, to make a ſport of Diſadiations amongſt Brethren; neither would I with *Alipius*, have been tempted to be a Spectator of the Gladiators among the *Romans*. As in paſſing through the Streets in *London*, I would not plod on without minding my way, or reſolve to go on in a direct Line, turning every one out of the way, without giving the leaſt place to them; but chuſe my way to eſcape the Dirt ſo far as I could, and turn my ſelf ſo as to paſs with the leaſt trouble to my ſelf, 2 Sam. 2. 14.

or offence to others; so in pa
through the World, I would not de
ſpiſe my way, walking at random, or
at adventures; nor rudely check all
that I meet with, or that ſtand in my
Prov. 19. 16. way; *but take heed to my way; ponder the paths of my feet*, that I may (ſo far
Levit. 26. 21. as I can) *keep my ſelf unſpotted of the*
Pſalm 39 1. *world*, and eſcape the pollutions of it; and
Prov. 4. 26. that I may (*if it be poſſible*) *live peaceably*
James 1. 27. *with all men, giving none offence, neither*
2 Peter 2. 20. *to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the*
Rom. 12. 18. *Church of God*; neither exaſperating
1 Cor. 10. 32. others, nor giving others occaſion t
1 Theſ. 3. 12, 13. exaſperate my ſelf. Sharp Humours di
compoſe the Soul, as well as the Body,
and hinder the thriving thereof. There
fore the Apoſtle prays for the *Theſſalo*
nians, That the Lord would make them
increaſe and abound in love one towards a
nother, and towards all men, to the end h
might eſtabliſh their hearts, unblameable i
holineſs. A Charitable frame of ſpi
tending much to the promoting ther
of. Yet we cannot wholly avoid trea
ing of things that are diſputable; a
it is an happy work, if any could the
by allay the Heats that are amon
Chriſtians, and ſet them right in th
thoughts about thoſe things that a
controvered, both to maintain a go
Und

Understanding and Accord among themselves, and to direct them in their Addresses and Applications to God. I have endeavoured to bring Water, not Oyl to the Fire. I know Water will make unquenched Lime burn, but I hope I shall not meet with any of that Temper. We should *with good advice make war*. We should consider whether we are able to deal with those that we undertake a War against. But tho we think that we are so, we should consider whether we have any just Cause to begin a War. There were great Preparations against the Two Tribes and an half on the other side of *Jordan*, the rest of the Tribes fearing that they would *bring wrath upon the whole Congregation of Israel*; but when matters came to be examined, they were pleased with the account that the Two Tribes and an half gave of what they had done. So many are ready to undertake a Religious War, or Dispute, against their Brethren, as if they were subverting the Christian Religion, or undermining the Foundation thereof; but when they come to examine matters, they find there is no cause of such heats or emotions of spirit; but those things

Prov. 20. 18.

Joshua 22. 18, &c.

which they are offended at, are either the private Opinions, or at leaſt the raſh and unadviſed Expreſſions of ſome particular Perſons, which the reſt of thoſe that are ſuppoſed to be of their Party do diſown. This is very ordinary amongſt all ſorts of perſons; and I know no ſort of perſons that will vouch every thing which is ſpoken by all that rank themſelves among them; let every one bear their own burthen, and let not others anſwer any further for what they ſay than they have given their conſent thereto. But ſometimes we may miſtake Perſons, and impute ſuch things to them as they do not believe. Many do not read mens own Works, but judge of their Opinions by what they read in thoſe that write againſt them, who often chuſe out ſuch paſſages as may give them moſt advantage againſt them, or which they can moſt eaſily anſwer, or will repreſent them as moſt blame-worthy to others, and juſtify their rough treatment of them. It is rare to find in Polemical Writings, ſuch Candour and Clearneſs as is obſerved in a late Writer, Mr. *Le Blanc*, who in ſtating many of the Differences betwixt us and the Papiſts

renders himself suspected by some on both sides; some Protestants thinking he is too favourable to the Papists in representing their Opinions; And some Papists have thought that he hath been partial in the account that he gives of the Doctrine of the Protestants; and yet both Papists and Protestants acquit him from wronging them, in setting down their own Opinions. Now it is a great disadvantage to any to have some Periods or Sentences taken out of their Writings, when we do not see on what occasion they write such things, nor what they write in other places, which may allay or qualify such harsh Expressions. I have seen a Letter which was so written, that if it were read at length every Line of it, did import one thing: but if it were so folded or turned down, as to hide the end of every Line, it was of a quite different tenor or signification. So a partial representation of mens minds, may subject them to great mistakes or misconstructions; yea, we may mistake men many times, tho we read their Writings our selves; we may say of the most Learned Writers, as is said of the *Egyptians*, *They are men, and not God*; they cannot see all 3. Isaiah 31.

all things at one ſingle view; and when men are intent on one thing, they will call in the ſervice of ſome *Hypotheſis* which may be for their preſent turn, and diſown it at another time, when they ſee that it will not well agree with ſome other Opinion which they would confirm. This is a weakneſs that I have obſerved in ſome of the moſt Learned men that I have read; eſpecially when they write much, and forget at one time what they have written at another; and it may be, have given an Interpretation of Scripture at one time, when it might ſerve an *Hypotheſis*, which they have anſwered themſelves on another occaſion, when ſome other Point which they have been treating of would not bear their former Interpretation. There muſt be an allowance made in ſuch caſes, for mens over-ſights and infirmities. Sometimes men do impute to others the Conſequences of their Opinions, and ſo repreſent their Opinions as very dangerous; but we ſhould not charge upon perſons what they do not expreſly own. It is true indeed, that from truth follows nothing but truth; but from ſome ſmall Error, dangerous Errors may follow; and few can

see the utmost tendency of all their Opinions, or what Consequences may be knit to each other. Therefore the Respondent, or he that Answers in Disputations, must always be wary what he grants, or what Concessions he makes, lest he should be driven to an Absurdity. As we cannot guard against all Accidents, so neither can we see every thing that may be deduced from what we may maintain, nor the Inferences which may be multiplied from it. Sometimes men love to express themselves in Rhetorical Strains, which must not be brought to a rigid Test or Examen. It is very natural to us to use *Hyperboles*, or Excesses of Speech; yea, God himself frequently uses them; they serving to raise our minds to some adequate conception of those things which plain words would not heighten them to. So God promises that he would multiply *the seed of Abraham, as the dust of the earth*, or *as the sand on the sea shore*. Gen. 15. 15. So he says, *He will take the names of Baalim out of their mouth, and they shall no more be remembred by their name*. Gen. 22. 17. Hosea 2. 17. Whereas *Paul* doth afterwards mention this name; and it is impossible that it should wholly depart out of Rom. 11. 4.

their mind. But he would thereby ſignify their great deteſtation of Idolatry. So where our Saviour bids his Diſciples that they ſhould *ſalute no man by the way*: it is not likely that he would forbid all expreſſions of Civility and Courteſy: but he ſeems only to warn them againſt long and tedious Compliments, and Conferences, which might retard them in their work which he ſent them about; the Prophet giving the like charge to his Servant when he ſent him in haſte: ſo in controverſial Writings there is ſomething of like nature, which we call ἀμετρία ἐνδοξίας whereby men (that they may make it ſeem that their Adverſaries depart far from the truth) run as far as they can on the other ſide, or ſay more than in a ſtrict ſenſe can be admitted. Hence it is that ſome of our firſt Reformers (the more to exaggerate the opinion of the Papiſts of the neceſſity of good works) have uſed ſuch harſh expreſſions, which are ſo liable to juſt Exception; as, that it is the firſt and the laſt, the worſt and moſt damnable Hereſy that ever was on Earth, To teach that good Works are neceſſary to Salvation;

Luke 10. 4.

2 Kings 4. 29.

and

and that good Works are ſo far from conducing to Salvation, that they are rather pernicious. When men will take ſuch liberty to themſelves in expreſſing their minds, they ſubject themſelves to great prejudices; but perhaps, if they were to explain themſelves in theſe things, they might be found to have a tolerable meaning in them. It is too well known, what differences there have been betwixt the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* about the Real Preſence of Chriſt in the Sacrament. Yet about 160 years ago, when divers Learned men of both Parties met to conſer about it, upon explaining their minds to each other in a calm and peaceable way, they were ſo fully agreed and ſatisfied, that they embraced each other as Brethren, and ſo parted. So that the differences among Chriſtians are not always from Error of Judgment, but a Strife of Words, through their unhappy expreſſing themſelves, and miſtaking each others minds.

There is another thing which I have obſerved to be an occaſion of many diſputes amongſt us, and that is the uſe of School-terms, or terms of Art, which indeed are very compendious,

and

and ſet off mens conceptions in few words, which would otherwiſe require a large circumlocution or compaſs of Speech. Yet they have this inconvenience, while men would be brief, they many times prove obſcure; and as *Abbreviations* in writing (which were more uſed, as is moſt likely, before Printing, when they were forced to write all) have occaſioned many errors, and multiplied various readings: ſo *Abbreviations* in ſpeaking, have multiplied Controverſies, and more time hath been ſpent about the meaning of ſome terms of Art, or School-diſtinctions, than would have been neceſſary to have expreſſed the ſame thing in many more words. Therefore it is rightly obſerved by the Lord *Verulam*, and other Learned men, that the Volumes of the Schoolmen are greater much than the firſt writings of the Fathers, from whence the Maſter of the Sentences made his firſt Collection. For while they purpoſe to abridge, they give cauſe to dilate. For the ſum or abridgment by contraction becomes obſcure, the obſcurity requries Expoſition, and the Expoſition is deduced into large Commentaries, which grow to be more vaſt than

than the Original Writings, from whence the ſum was firſt extracted. And whoſoever ſhall look into Polemical Writings, ſhall find that a great part of them is taken up about ſtrife of words, and many of their queſtions about ſecond notions, or fitting School-terms to matters of Religion. Hence it is that Philoſophy is made ſuch a neceſſary Handmaid to Divinity; as of old they would ſometimes appeal to the *Heathen* Philoſophers in their Theological Diſputations, becauſe their queſtions were about ſuch terms as had been brought out of their Schools into Divinity. And hereby they do (in a manner) keep the ordinary ſort of Chriſtians in ignorance of many things, by involving them in School-terms: as others do by locking them up in an unknown Tongue; even thoſe Learned men from whoſe Writings (as I have obſerved) the Sentences (which are the Text on which the Schoolmen Comment) were firſt Collected, would be as much put to it to underſtand their Writings, as they would be to underſtand the Language now ſpoken in *Italy*, after it hath ſuffered ſuch changes through

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the concourſe of ſo many people to *Rome*, but eſpecially through the Invaſions of ſeveral Nations. There are many things made unintelligible to ordinary perſons, which if diveſted of thoſe terms of Art wherewith they are diſguiſed, and cloathed in our ordinary Language, would be plain to all. Every one knows what it is to eaſe Pain, to expel Wind, to cauſe Sleep, to provoke Sweat; but they know not what is *Anodyne*, or *Narcotick*; what is *Carminative*, *Hypnotick*, *Diaphoretick*. Thoſe that well underſtand what is Red, or Blue, or Black, or Green, do not know the meaning of Gules, or Azure, or Sable, or Vert. So in Religion, many things that are plain, are made obſcure by the terms that they are expreſſed in. But if we ſee plainly that perſons are in an error, let us not exaggerate or aggravate their fault, as they do the Crimes of Malefactors in drawing up their Indictments: as if every thing that they are charged with, were done Feloniouſly, Traiterouſly, Maliciouſly, of Set-purpoſe, out of a wicked intention; we ſhould be cautious of charging every one with *rebelling againſt*

the

the light, or as *being condemned of himself*, that hath means which we think sufficient to convince him. We can hardly imagine what influence the course of mens studies, the company that they converse with, their prejudices, and interest, have upon their judgments. Who knows the power of Interest? *A gift blinds the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous.* It is more to blind the eyes, than to pervert the Will, or sway the Affections. But it first commends a man to the favour of another, and then it determines his mind to the study or consideration of such things as do (unawares) beguile him into a good opinion of his Cause, so as he pronounces sentence in favour of him. So Interest sways mens studies, and chuses their company, and these insensibly determine their judgments. Again, it should not seem strange to us if we do not see all men rise up to some Learned men, which we think have so clearly demonstrated things, that nothing can be further objected against them, nor any further doubt made of them. For there are many that are not easily determined in their judgements by the Writings

Job 24. 13. Tit. 3. 11.

Exod. 23. 8. Prov. 18. 16.

Writings of Learned men; while they conſider, that ſuch perſons may be (and often are) influenced by their Intereſt and Affections, (which do eaſily beguile their judgments) to ſay what they can, and can ſay almoſt what they pleaſe. As one that had made a Learned Diſcourſe about the Trinity (for which he was much commended and admired) ſaid, he had much confirmed and advanced the truth of Chriſt; but if he were minded to deal croſſly, he knew how with ſtronger Reaſons and Arguments to confute the ſame. And a very Learned man (known to many that are yet living) told one (who related it to me) that he could write a Book as big as *Suarez* his *Metaphyſicks*, to prove a Deity, and then write another as big to refute it. Theſe things conſidered, would incline us to more mutual forbearance, and Charity. Many that we look upon as erroneous (if we did rightly underſtand them) might (perhaps) be found to be of our mind, and to think the ſame things with our ſelves. Others that do err, yet (as one ſaid) will not be Hereticks; that is, will not perſiſt in their error,

Simon Churmay at Paris, 1201.

ror [illegible] they be convinced of it: which it is not ſo eaſy a matter as many imagine to be; as *Auguſtin* ſaid to the *Manichees*, *They rage againſt you, that know not with how great labour the truth is found out, and with how great difficulty errors are avoided.* God hath left many things in his word clear and plain wherein moſt Chriſtians do conſent: but other things for the exerciſe of our diligence, and mutual forbearance, in this ſtate of Imperfection wherein we ſee but in part.

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PAg. 2. l. 12. for as r. *us*. p 23. l. 1. blot out the 2*d*. and p 42. for pleaded r. *placed*. p. 73. l 8. blot out *and*. p. 77. l. 25. for and r. *so*. p. 83. l. 28. r. *Doctis*. p. 89. l. 29. r. *Politian*. p. 94. l 25. blot out *he*. p. 117. l. 4. for extasy r. *excess*. p. 119. l. 12. r. *nearer*. l. 28. for helps r. *hope*. p. 125. l. 16. for were r. *are*. There are some other literal faults which the Reader may easily see to be the mistake of the Printer.

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A REMEDY AGAINST TROUBLE.

JOHN XIV. 1.

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.

CHAP. I.

THE design of Christ in these Words, is either to prepare his Disciples for receiving what he had to say to them in this his last Sermon before his Death; *For sorrow had filled their hearts.* And till that is allayed John 16. men

men are unfit to receive Counsel. Therefore *Job*'s Friends staid some time till his grief was allwaged, when they saw it great upon him, before they
Job 2. 13. would speak to him. Or as Learned Men first lay down their Thesis, which they are to prove, and when they have proved it, resume it again, as the
Eccl. 1. 2. Chap. 12. 8. Wise-man doth. So here he charges them, that they should not let their Hearts be troubled (those things affect as much that reach the Heart either with Grief or Joy, *John* 16. 22.); when therefore he had prescribed Remedies against this Trouble, he concludes his Discourse to his Disciples with the same in effect, telling them, that he spake these things to them, that they might have Peace in him, tho they had Tribulation in the World. And as he there warns them that they should have Trouble in the World; so in the close of the Chapter, before these words that I have recited, he forewarns them of what should happen to them; yet here charges them that they should not let their hearts be troubled. So that we may hence observe, That Christ would not have his People too much lay to heart the Troubles and Discouragements that they meet with

in

in the World. Christ doth not deal with his Hearers, as the false Prophets of old used to do, *seeing for them foolish visions, and causes of banishment: Healing their hurt slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there was no peace.* Or as Physicians of no value, that give *Anodines* to allay Pain, but do not take away the Cause of it, or make their Patients believe the worst is over, and that their Disease is declining, before it be come to its state; but he gives strong Consolation, *such as will cause the lips of those that are asleep to speak*; such as will support the Soul under the greatest Troubles, or supposing the worst that can happen. Christ doth in the Scriptures deal faithfully with us, not flattering us into vain hopes of Peace and Prosperity; but supposing the utmost that may befal us, provides sufficiently against it. As when the Apostle would comfort the *Romans* against Afflictions, he grants the worst, telling them how it had been with Good men in former times (and so what they must look for) *That for Gods sake they had been killed all the day long, and appointed as sheep to the slaughter*; and yet they were not only Conquerors, *but more than conquerors in all these things,*

Lam. 2. 14. Jer. 8. 11. Heb. 6. 18 Cant. 7. 9. Rom. 8. 36, 37.

Phil. 4. 13. *through him that loved them*, that is, *through Christ strengthening them.* We are Conquerors when we get the Victory so far, as not to be foiled by Temptations. As *Sulpitius Severus*, an Ancient Historian, saith, *Ad Annum* 303. *We never overcame with greater Triumph, than when we could not be overcome with Ten Years Slaughter*, which was the last of the Ten Primitive Persecutions under *Diocletian.* But we are more than Conquerors, when we rejoyce in our Sufferings; When our Sufferings enhance our future Happiness; *working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*; and turn to the furtherance of the Gospel: This is to *lead captivity captive.* Now our Saviour doth forewarn them of several things which seem to be just cause of trouble, yet he would not have them let their hearts be troubled. He had chosen them out of the World, and thereby exposed them to the hatred of the World. Now, while he was with them, he was (as is said of *Job*) continually strengthening them by his Words, feeding them by Miracles when there was occasion; so that they lacked nothing while he was with them. The *Jews* would sometimes assault him with captious Questi-

Acts 5. 41. Col. 1. 11, 24. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 12. Psalm 68. 10. John 15. 19. Luke 22. 35.

ons,

ons, but he confounded them so, as they durst ask him no more. When they came to take him, they went a way, *and none durst lay hands on him.* But when he was gone, they were left alone, and had none to stand by them; yea, they thought their Hopes were gone, and they were disappointed in them. Besides, it could not but be a great trouble to them, that their Master should be injuriously and shamefully intreated, when it was so great a Provocation to them, to see him so slighted by the *Samaritans*; and then, that one of them should betray him, the rest forsake him, and *Peter* himself deny him. *Judas* was one of their Society, and they suspected him as little as they did themselves; and tho he were a Son of Perdition, they might be grieved for him, as *Samuel* was for *Saul.* And besides, when they saw *Judas* betray him, and *Peter* deny him, they might not know what they should do themselves: It was time for them *that stood, to take heed lest they should fall.* And that which would further aggravate their trouble, was, that they looked for a Temporal Kingdom here on Earth, and could not endure to think of the Cross; and would have had

Luke 20. 40. John 7. 44. Luke 24. 21. Luke 9. 54. 1 Sam. 15. 35. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

Matth. 16. 22. Christ to spare himself. Now, after all this, it may seem hard that Christ should lay this Charge upon them, that they should not let their hearts be troubled. They might think that they ought to be troubled for these things; yea, that they *could not but be troubled* Heb. 12. 5. *for them.* For we should *not despise the chastening of the Lord, as we should not* Jer. 5. 3. *faint when we are rebuked of him*; We Isaiah 42. 24, 25. should take heed of both extreams. It was the Sin of the *Jews*, that when God smote them, *they were not grieved*, and that they did not lay his Judgment 1 Pet. 5. 6. to heart: We ought to *humble our selves under his mighty hand*: And we find that John 11. 33. Christ himself *was troubled at the death of Lazarus.*

Now to all this I answer, That we should not suffer our selves to be transported by any Passion, neither should Sorrow too much affect our hearts; but as it is said of Christ in the place now mentioned, *He troubled himself*, (So it is in the Margent, according to the *Greek*) we should in our Passions be not only Passive, but Active, *ruling our own* Prov. 16. 32. *spirits*, letting them out only so far as the matter requires; as it is said of 2 Pet. 2. 8. *Lot*, That he *vexed his righteous soul.* We use to say of Fire and Water, they

are

are good Servants if they be kept within their bounds; but they are bad Masters when they exceed their limits. We may say the same of our Passions; we may yield so far to sorrow as to hallow the mind therewith, and keep it steddy, so it will *make the heart better*. Eccl. 7. 3. But we must not so far give way thereto, as to overburden our spirits therewith, so as to sink them, or overwhelm them; so as to *break our spirits*; so as to make us unfit for Prayer, or uncapable of Counsel; nor so as to weaken our hands in the Lords works; nor so as to *slight his consolations*, or to give others occasion to think that we have low thoughts of God, as if we could not satisfy our selves with him, and his Favour (as *David* did in his Troubles, *Psalm* 63. 3, 4.) without the Addition of outward Comforts. As *Elkanah* took it ill, that *Hannah* could not content her self with him, as better than Ten Sons. *Joab* looked upon it in *David*, as a slighting of his faithful Subjects, when he was so out of measure troubled for the loss of *Absalom*.

2 Cor. 2. 7. Psal. 102. Prov. 15. 13. Psal. 77. 4. Job 2. 13. Neh. 8. 10. Job 15. 11. 1 Sam. 1. 8. 2 Sam. 19. 6.

For the *Second Objection*, That they are things of that nature which he had forewarned them of, that they *could not but be troubled* at them.

I answer, That as Christ would not deceive his Disciples with vain hopes, but tells them the worst before-hand: So he provides a sufficient Remedy against the Troubles which he forewarns them of. He doth not, as some that take upon them to confute some dangerous Errors, when their Arguments are weak, and not satisfactory, and so they do more hurt than good, while reciting such Errors, they publish them to the World without a sufficient Answer, not sufficiently fortifying persons against them. But as Christ told them such things as filled their hearts with sorrow, so he provides Consolations for them answerable thereto; as he doth ordinarily proportion the Consolations of his People, to their Tribulations. He doth indeed in this and the following Chapters, propound particular Remedies against those several Troubles which he had warned them against: But the great *Catholicon* or General Remedy which he recommends to them, is Faith in God, and in Jesus Christ. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*; which words are not only an oppolite *Command* to what he warns them against (as that of Christ to *Thomas*, John 20. 27. *be not faithless, but believing*); but also

2 Cor. 1. 5.

alſo a means to prevent Trouble of Mind.

Some queſtion how theſe words ſhould be read, becauſe the *Greek* word is the ſame in both places, and may be taken either indicatively (as they ſpeak) or imperatively; that is, either declaring what they already did, or requiring what they ſhould do. So that ſome read them, *Ye believe in God, ye believe alſo in me.* Therefore they ſhould not let their hearts be troubled, as indeed they had profeſſed their Faith not only in God, but in Jeſus Chriſt. Matth. 1 16.

Others again read them both as a Command to believe in God, and to believe in Chriſt; becauſe they think it is not likely that he ſhould commend them for their Faith, or acknowledg that they did believe, when he blames them ſo oft for their unbelief, as *Matth.* 6. 30. *and* 14. 31. *Mark* 2. 40. But when there is Faith, and that to a good degree, it may fail for a time under Temptation, as *Abraham* did (tho he was the Father of the Faithful) both in *Egypt*, and in *Gerar*. Gen. 12. 13. Gen. 26. 2.

Some read it, *Believe in God, and ye believe in me*; as Chriſt tells them, *He that had ſeen him, had ſeen the Father*; becauſe he was the expreſs Image of John 14. 9. Heb. 1. 9.

his Person. So, he that did believe in the Father, did believe also in him, *because he and the Father were one.*

John 10. 30.

But I think our Translation doth best express our Saviour's meaning. They did not question God's Being or Veracity, but they were required further upon pain of Damnation *to believe on Christ.* And he saw what was like to befal him, would shake their Faith, as indeed it did, and they were ready to give up their Hopes. So he may here press them still to believe, or to continue so to do; As the Apostle saith, *These things have I written to you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God;* that is, may continue still so to do.

John 8. 24. John 16. 32. Luke 24. 21. 1 John 5. 13.

What is objected against this Interpretation of the Words, is not considerable, *viz.* That it is not likely that the same word should be taken in two several Senses in one Verse. There is nothing more ordinary than to have the same words in different Moods in the same Verse (which is the case here) as *Ezek.* 3. 27. *He that hears, let him hear; and he that forbears, let him forbear.* So Matth. 19. 12. *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.* But it is more to

translate the same words differently in the same place, which yet the nature of the thing, or the matter in hand doth sometime necessarily require, as *John* 2. 23, 24. many believed in his name, *but Jesus committed not himself to them*; or durst not trust them.

CHAP. II.

I Will now proceed to shew: 1. What it is to believe in God and Christ. 2. Why it is here required that we should not only believe in God, but in Jesus Christ. 3. What an effectual Remedy this is against Trouble of Mind. *First*, To believe *in* God, or *on* God and Christ (for both these Expressions are frequently used in the *New Testament*, as any one in reading may easily observe) is so to believe God, or Christ, as to trust in him, to rely on him, *to stay our selves on him*, to *rest* our selves on him, as Dr. *Hammond* expresses it in his Practical Catechism, *Lib.* 1. *Sect.* 3. and before him our Translators of the Bible in the Margent of *Psal.* 22. 8. To believe, we know (in its most proper signification) is to assent,

Isa. 26. 4. Phil. 2. 19, 24. 2 Chron. 13. 18. 16. 7. Isa. 50. 10.

sent to any thing upon the Authority of him that speaks it. *Therefore he that believes not, makes God a Lyar*; That is, accounts him such by Interpretation, or
1 John 5. 10. deals with him as if he were so. Whereas on the contrary, *he that doth believe him, or receive his Testimony, sets to his Seal* (that is, owns and acknowledges)
John 3. 33. *that he is true.* But this is such a Faith as wicked men may have, and not that saving Faith which the Scripture so often speaks of; but that is a fiducial resting upon him, for the accomplishment of what he hath promised in the way, and upon the terms whereon he hath promised it, and no otherwise. For that would be an unwarrantable presumption, not properly a believing in him, he having not promised such things on any other terms.

Now for the further clearing of this, we may observe, that there are Words not only in Scripture, but in Heathen Authors (many Instances of which I could give you) which they call *pregnant words*, which include or comprise some other word in them. As where it is said, all the People trembled after *Saul*, as
1 Sam. 13. 7. (you see in the Margent) the *Hebrew* word signifies, which our Translators well render, *They followed him trembling.*

So *Joab* and *Abiathar helped* after *Adonijah*: That is, following after *Adonijah*, helped him. *So to wonder after the Beast, is to follow him wondering.* So God *heard* *David* from the horns of the Unicorns. Which doth not imply, that God was there when he heard him, as he is said to hear from Heaven his dwelling-place; but to hear him so as to save him from the danger wherein he was; which is set *forth* by that Metaphor, as in the foregoing words *by the Lions Mouth.* As Christ was *heard from his Fear*, or that which he was afraid of. Neither do we need to render it as it is in the Margent, for his *piety*: For the word doth not only signify a religious Awe, or fear of Reverence, but a fear of danger, as is evident from *Acts* 23. 10. In like manner, *God loved the Soul of Hezekiah from the Pit of Corruption:* That is, as our Translators render it, *in love to his Soul, delivered it from the Pit of Corruption.* So *to repent from wickedness*, as the *Greek* words imply, is so to repent of it, as to turn from it, or depart from it; and to be *corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*, is to be corrupted so as to depart from it.

1 King 1. 7.
Rev. 13. 3.
Psal. 22. 21.
Heb. 5. 7.
Isa. 38. 17.
Acts 8. 22.
2 Cor. 11. 3.

I know some Learned men, observing how the prepositions both in the Hebrew

brew and Greek are redundant, or superfluous; that is, signify nothing in many places: They conclude, that to believe in God, or Christ, signifies no more but to believe them. I answer, that tho' we must suppose improprieties of speech, defects, or redundancies where the nature of the thing in hand doth necessarily require it: yet there is no reason why we should so do, when the matter in hand doth not require it, but rather that we should take in such words, or make use of them.

It is further to be observed, that some words signify a complex act made up of many particular acts. For example, to *Nurse* a Child, tho' it signify in the strictest sense to nourish or feed it, by giving it meat or milk: yet in the larger and most ordinary sense it is to take care of it, in all that is necessary to be done to it. So a Shepherd in most languages hath his name from feeding his Flock; but there is more belongs to it, than giving them Food, or leading *them into green Pastures.* Or if we understand thereby Spiritual Pastors that are to feed the Flock of God, This signifies not only feeding them with the Doctrine of the word, as 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. And as some understand feeding with knowledge and

Psal. 23. 2.

1 Pet. 5. 2.

and understanding, not of the manner, but the matter of feeding; but it comprehends the whole duty of a Shepherd, strengthening the diseased, healing the sick, binding up that which is broken; bringing again that which is driven away; seeking that which is lost; Gathering the Lambs with his arms, carrying them in this bosom, gently leading those that are with young. So tho Faith (in its most strict and proper sense) be an *Assent* to the Truth, yet it comprehends many *other Acts* in it, when we speak of a justifying or saving Faith.

Jer. 3. 15.

Ezek. 34. 4.

Isa. 40. 11.

I may further add, That there are some words in Scripture which are not to be understood their in strict and precise Sense, but presupposing some other things, and comprehending such things as should or may be presumed to accompany or follow them. For example, Justification is sometimes ascribed to the knowledge of Christ, as it is said, *by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many*; and therefore doth the Apostle so magnify the knowledge of him, *Phil* 3. 8. accounting all things but loss for the excellency thereof: But it is not a *bare knowledge* of him that is of such value and excellency, but of his Work

Isa. 53. 11.

and

and Office, what he is, and for what he was sent into the World; which doth suppose what our own estate is, and of what use he is to us; and such a knowledge of him as puts us upon making use of him for the end for which he was given to mankind, and came into the World; then do we truly know him; as we know that we know God when we keep his commands. Otherwise we do but profess to know him, when in works we deny him. When *Josiah* judged the cause of the poor and the needy, and did Judgment and Justice, this was to know God. Thus Salvation sometimes seems to be suspended upon our believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. But this faith will not save, if it go no further: For the Devils believe this, as well as that there is but one God. But as there must be such a knowledge of him supposed, as I have before spoken of; so it must be such a belief as brings us to him, or makes us come to him, as having both righteousness and strength in him. This is *believing with all the heart*, when we do gladly and willingly apply our selves to him for Grace and Salvation. For thus to seek to God, or to Christ, is to come to him; That which is called coming to God,

1 Joh. 2. 3.
Tit. 1. 16.
Jer. 22. 15, 16.
Joh. 20. 31.
Acts 8. 37.
1 Joh. 5. 1.
Mark 1. 24.
Joh. 6. 35, 37.
Isa. 45. 24.
Heb. 11. 6.

God, is in the same verse expounded diligently to seek him; so they say, *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee.* *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God.* So we must receive Jesus Christ, that is, accept of him for our Saviour, submit our selves to his way and method of Salvation; saying with *Paul, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* So our Faith must work by love, his readiness and willingness to save us at the price of his own Blood, must make us love him who loved us first; *And this love will constrain us, while we judg, that he dying for us when we were dead, we should no more live to our selves but to him that died for us, and is risen again.*

Jer. 2. 31. Psal. 10. 4 Joh. 1. 12 Acts 9. 6. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Joh. 4. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 15.

I will endeavour to make this more plain by a similitude. There may be some Physician in the Country, whom we may reckon our selves happy that we ever knew or heard of: Tho' there are many that know of such a person, and perhaps live near him, yet do not regard him, because he is nothing to them, while they find themselves well, and see no need of him. But we were sick of a dangerous disease, which we never heard that any were cured of, till this Physician came amongst us, but hearing

hearing that he cured all that he took in hand, that would follow his directions, that he was so obliging, that he turned away none that came to him; that he expected neither fee nor present from the poor that had nothing to give, but cured them *Gratis*; we chose him for our Physician, applied our selves to him, followed his Directions, and find already such a change and alteration in our selves, and so good success, that we resolve to stick to him, and follow his directions, looking for perfect cure in time from him. This is our case; Jesus Christ is come into the World to save sinners; many know this, but are never the better for it, because they not finding themselves sick, think they need
Mat. 9. 12. not the Physician, and so never apply
Rom. 10. themselves to him. But we knowing
14. the miserable condition wherein we were, think our selves happy that ever we heard tidings of him; *for how should we believe on him of whom we have not heard?* But we looked upon it as *worthy of all acceptation, That Christ came into the World to save sinners.* Hereupon we ap-
1 Tim. 1. plied our selves to him, tho' we had
13. neither price nor present to find acceptance with him; yet did we not seek his favour, that we might continue in

Sin

Sin, but that he would save us from our Sins, and bless us in turning us from our iniquities. Thus we see that Faith, or that saving act whereby we are justified and saved, is neither a bare notional knowledge, nor a barren dead Faith, but such a belief of the Gospel, as doth suppose our miserable estate by nature, as brings us to Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, not only for pardon of sin, so as we may avoid the wrath to come, but for entire and compleat Salvation, so as iniquity may not have dominion over us: but that we may be freed from the bondage of it, and so redeemed from it, as to be a peculiar people to God, *zealous of good works*. I shall have occasion to add something afterwards which may more fully clear up this point, and so shall at present proceed to the second thing which I propounded to speak of, *viz.*

Mat. 1. 21. Acts, 3. 26. Rom. 6. 14. Tit 2. 14.

Why we are to believe in Christ as well as in God.

First, If we consider Christ as God, of the same Essence with the Father, so we are to honour the Son as we honour the Father; for so he and the Father are one. But if we consider him as Mediator, so we are to believe in him as the immediate object of our Faith, and by him

Joh. 5. 23. Joh. 10. 30.

1 Pet. 1. 23. him to believe in God. As the knowledge of Christ must be superadded to
Joh. 17. 3. the knowledge of God for obtaining Eternal Life; so Faith in Christ must be joined with our Faith in God. We
Heb. 7. 25. must come to God by him. None can
Joh 6. 44. come to the Son but by the Father, that is, by his grace drawing them. But
Joh 14. 6. none can come to the Father but by the Son. That is they must have access to the Father through his mediation. As the *Tyrians* made *Blastus* their Friend when they came to desire Peace of *Herod*; So if we would have Peace with
Acts 12. 20. God, we must have access to him by Jesus Christ, it is he that must bring us
Rom. 5. 2. to God. We must first by Faith come
Eph 2. 18. to Christ, and he must introduce us to
1 Pet. 3. 18. God, that we may find acceptance with
Ephes. 1. 6. him. The Jews were so terrified at the giving of the Law, that they were afraid of having to do any more immediately with God, and therefore desired that *Moses* might come betwixt God and
Exod. 20. 19. them. Now as the *Athenians* had an obscure notion of an unknown God, but the Apostle declared to them *him whom they ignorantly worshipped*; so here
Acts 17. 23. the *Jews* had some Conviction of the necessity of a Mediator, and they pitched on *Moses* as the fittest person for it

that

that they could think of: But God answered to the ground of their desire, and promises them a Mediator (which they could never have thought of) that was fit for that Office, *doing for them above what they could ask or think.* As God doth doth many times in answering the Prayers of his people, grant the thing which they desire, but not in such a way, or by such means as they might think of, but by some more proper way or means which his wisdom finds out. Deut. 18. 15, &c. Ephes. 3. 20.

But further; before the Incarnation of Christ, they were to believe in the *Messiah to come*; but now that he was come, and had given sufficient proof that he was the promised *Messiah*, by doing these works which never any man did, they were to determine their Faith on him in particular, or dye in their Sins. Joh. 15. 22. Joh. 8. 24.

But he doth likewise press this upon them, because he foresaw what discouragements they were like to meet with, and how likely their Faith was to be shaken in this particular. *A crucified Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness.* The *Jews* thought that the *Messiah* when he came, should abide for ever; therefore his Disciples when they saw his Death, gave up their 1 Cor. 1. 23. John 12. 34.

Luke 24. 20. their hopes. And the *Greeks* looked upon it as an absurd ridiculous thing, to believe in a Crucified Person, and worship one as God that died the most Infamous death of men. Therefore it was needful to caution them against such a Temptation, by encouraging them still to believe on him, tho' he did leave them, and by such an infamous Death; And doth after his Resurrection upbraid them for their folly in being so slow of heart to believe, because this was but according to what the Scripture had foretold, that he must suffer before he entred into his glory. The Scripture was to be fulfilled in some thing which did not seem in themselves so necessary, as the parting of Christ's Raiment and not breaking his bones. But But as we speak of some things that are necessary, not only by vertue of a Command, or because they are required, but as a mean in order to an end: So the Scripture was to be fulfilled in this, not only to save its veracity, or that it might not be broken; but in order to the bringing of his people to glory. For he had continued alone, if he had not died and been buried, and would not have had such a numerous seed. As a Grain of Wheat if it die in the earth, that is, corrupts

Luke 24. 26.

Joh. 19. 24, 35.

Joh. 10. 35.

Heb. 2.10.

Joh. 12. 24.

rupts, and ſpears, and *brings forth much fruit*, otherwiſe it abides alone: So Christ was to be made perfect through ſuffering, *and was to become a Curſe for us, that he might deliver us from the Curſe.* So that they were ſtill to believe in him, notwithſtanding all ſeeming diſcouragements. Gal. 3. 13.

Indeed we are ready to be troubled at many things which if well conſidered may rather encourage our hopes. The Senſe which we have of our own vileneſs and unworthineſs, and the conflict which we find in our own Souls, do many times diſcourage us, as if it were not for ſuch to come to Chriſt: Whereas the former ſhould (as the Law) be our School-maſter to bring us to Chriſt. The greater our Sin is, the more need we have of pardon. We may plead the greatneſs of our Sin, as an argument for the pardon of it, and the pardon of great Sinners will beſt anſwer God's end in the Pardon of Sin. Therefore this is the beſt qualification to fit us for Chriſt, which is not to make him willing to accept of us, but to make us willing to accept of him; He muſt not find us new Creatures, but make us ſuch. And the conflict which we find in us (as it may be) is an evidence that there is in us a Pſal. 25. 10. Epheſ. 2. 7. Epheſ. 2. 10.

Principle

Principle of Spiritual Life, resisting our natural corruption.

I now shall shew you that Faith is the most effectual remedy against trouble. The *Apostle* prays that the *Romans* may be filled *with all joy and peace in believing*. That is, that they might abound with the greatest measure thereof, as this expression in Scripture frequently signifies, not all sorts or kinds of any thing, but an high degree of any thing in its kind. So all Faith and all knowledge, are not all kinds of Faith, but the greatest measure or degree of that Faith which he there speaks of, that is the Faith of Miracles: Or of such knowledge as he there treats of; In like manner we are to understand all Wisdom. So by believing we are not only kept in perfect Peace, but rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Joy is more than Peace, we may thereby not only have our minds quieted and composed, but may make our Boast of God, and with *David* call him our exceeding joy.

Rom. 15. 13.

1 Cor. 13. 2.

Col. 1. 9. 3, 16.

Isa. 26. 3.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Psal. 34. 2.

Psal. 43. 4.

I will first give you some general Proofs that it is so, and then shew you how it is so. We find in the Old Testament that this was the chief remedy that the People of God did in all their troubles

troubles betake themſelves to; not only by what virtue the Apoſtle aſcribes to their Faith, but by the frequent uſe which *David* makes thereof when at any time he was in any fear or trouble; when fear was on every ſide; while men took counſel together to take away his Life, he truſted in God, and ſtirs up himſelf to this when he was caſt down or diſquieted. And what time he was afraid, that is whenſoever he was ſo, he would truſt in God. And whereas it may ſeem to ſome, that this doth not ſo well agree with what he ſaith of the righteous man, That he ſhall not be afraid of any evil tidings, his heart being fix'd, truſting in the Lord: Theſe places ſhew, that tho good men may unavoidably be ſurpriſed with ſudden fear, yet Faith is the way to cure it. We ſee by experience, that there are ſome ſudden motions of the affections, which prevent all reaſonings of the Mind. As we ſometime ſtart at what we do unawares hear or ſee, but our fear is over as ſoon as we can recollect our ſelves, and either ſee that there was no real danger, or ſecure our ſelves againſt it. So when we apprehend any ſudden danger which may alarm our fear, all is quiet when we can by Faith

Heb. 11.

Pſalm 31. 13, 14.

Pſalm 42. 11.

Pſalm 56. 3.

Pſal. 112. 7.

betake our ſelves to God as our refuge, or caſt all our care upon him. And as this was the remedy which good men did then betake themſelves to; ſo under the New Teſtament Chriſt imputes the inordinate cares and fears of his Diſciples to the weakneſs or want of Faith. So he reproves the weakneſs of their Faith when they were too ſollicitous about the things of the World, or the neceſſaries of this life. One would think that it were one of the beſt uſes or advantages of riches, to free us from ſollicitous cares, and that a man might with him in *Luke* 12. 20. diſmiſs all further care about theſe things, when he is richly ſtored with them: But we have ſeen often, that Faith is more effectual for this end, and that a Promiſe is better ſecurity than a great Eſtate. So when *Peter* was ſo afraid upon the Water, Chriſt upbraids him with the weakneſs of his Faith: And when they were in a ſtorm, and thereby put into a great fright, Chriſt asks them according to one Evangeliſt, How it was that they had not faith? and according to another, Where their Faith was? they had it not actually at that time. As ſome Philoſophers make Knowledge to conſiſt in Remembrance, as if

Hiiah 12. 2.

Matth. 6. 30.

Heb. 13. 5.

Mark 4. 40.

Luke 8. 25.

that

that were not to be accounted Knowledge which is only habitual, and not actual. However tho they had Faith, yet they had it to seek, as a Work-man that when he should use a tool, it is laid out of the way, and so at present wants the benefit of it. As a man that is ready to faint, and may have a Cordial in his Closet, yet if it be not at hand when he should use it, he may fall into a swoon if he do not take it.

I will now shew more particularly how Faith is such an effectual remedy against trouble of mind; and the chief reason thereof is, Because thereby we have our sins pardoned. As sin is the Sting of Death, so it is also of every affliction; therefore he is a Blessed man whose iniquities are forgiven. Psalm 32. 1.

CHAP. III.

NOw for the more full clearing of this Point, I will, first, shew you what pardon of sin is. 2. How this is obtained by Faith. 3. How great a privilege and happiness it is. Remission or forgiveness of sin is in its most ordinary sense, freeing or exempting the sinner from the punishment of it.

and sometimes it hath respect only to the *temporal punishment*; so God forgave the *Israelites* in the wilderness when he did not punish them. So it is said God would not pardon the Innocent Blood which *Manasses* shed, tho it is supposed the Eternal punishment of it was remitted. In this respect we must forgive each other; in this sense we pray for the forgiveness of the sins of a Nation; and no doubt in this sense those that are in a state of Grace may pray dayly for Pardon of sin. Tho' I doubt not but men that are already justified may pray for the pardon of sin in the most proper sense, as Christ by one Sacrifice perfecting for ever those that are sanctified, doth not prevent his intercession, or make that unnecessary: So neither doth our full discharge from the guilt of all our sins, discharge us from praying daily for the forgiveness of them. When we are in the fullest possession of the greatest abundance of the things of this Life, we are to pray for our daily bread, that is, not only for the blessing and comfort, but for the *continuance* of them. So tho' our sins be pardoned when we first believe, we may pray daily for the *continuance* of the vertue and efficacy of the Blood

Num. 14. 19.

2 Kings 24. 4.

Matth. 6. 14.

Ephes. 4. 32.

1 Kings 8. 34. and 39. 50.

Amos 7. 2.

Heb. 10. 14.

Blood of Christ upon our consciences, for the continuance of our peace with God. But that remission of sins which we have by Jesus Christ, is the discharging us from the *eternal punishment*, and is the same thing in effect with justification. In the former verse the Apostle saith, Through Christ is preached *forgiveness of sins*; in the latter, that whoever believes on him, is *justified*. Not that justification and forgiveness of sins are the same thing in the precise notion of them; but where many say, that they are the same thing, they only intend thereby to exclude that sense of the Word *justifying*, in which the Papists sometimes take it, viz. for making righteous by Renovation, Sanctification, or infusion of new habits. But there may be justification where there is not Pardon of sin, when a person is acquitted or declared free from that, which he was suspected of, or charged with: So not only a righteous man may be justified, but God himself. And as there may be justification without Pardon, so Pardon without justification. I do not mean that actually, or *de facto*, there is Pardon, or a remission of the Eternal punishment of sin, where there is not justification: But we may conceive of a

Acts 13. 38, 39.

Deut. 25. 1. Luke 7. 29. Rom 3. 4.

Pardon without juſtification; as there are ſome that acknowledge a Pardon of ſin merely out of mercy, without reſpect to any ſatisfaction made to Divine Juſtice; and tho the Scripture ſpeaks more frequently of the juſtification of ſinners, than to have it denied; yet they ſay that juſtification is only by a *Metonomy* taken for pronouncing a ſinner juſt, and dealing with him as if he were righteous, freeing him from the guilt and puniſhment of ſin; and beſtowing eternal life on him. Whereas in the ſenſe of the Scripture, to juſtify is to acquit or diſcharge a ſinner from the guilt and puniſhment of ſin, upon the Imputation of righteouſneſs to him. But as we muſt not ſuppoſe that God only deals with us as if we were righteous, which ſome ſuppoſe he might, tho Chriſt ſhould not be ſuppoſed to have died in our ſtead, or have born our ſin: yea, tho he had not died at all. So on the other hand, we muſt not imagine that God in imputing righteouſneſs to ſinners, doth think or ſuppoſe that *they have not ſinned*, or have *ſatisfied the Law* for their ſin. Imputation doth not imply any ſuch thing. When *Shimei* deſires that *David* would *not impute iniquity* to him, we cannot ſuppoſe

Rom. 4.6.

2 Sam. 19 19.

pose that he desires that he would think or make account that he had not done iniquity, but that he would not *charge* it upon him, or *deal with him according to it*; and where it is said, the Sacrifice of him that should be eaten on the third day, should *not be imputed to him*; the meaning of it is, that he should not have the *benefit* of it, or be dealt with according thereto. But to keep the true mean between these, we must suppose, that God deals thus with us, *not imputing our sins to us, in consideration of what Christ hath done for us, or in our stead.* As where *Paul* allows *Philemon* to put *Onesimus* his wrong or debt (for which it is like he might be put into the same Prison where *Paul* was) *on his account*; as he would not have him think that it was *Paul*, and not *Onesimus*, that had wronged him; neither would he have him to punish it no more in *Onesimus* than if he had not done it, but *Paul*. But he tells him, and gives it under his hand, that he would repay it, or satisfy him for it. So God doth not only deal with us as if we were righteous, in remitting our eternal punishment: But he doth this in consideration of what Christ hath done and suffered for us: He having laid upon him the iniquities

Lev. 7.18.

Philem. 18.

Isaiah 53. 6. of us all. And God having by his Soveraignty so far dispensed with his
Gal. 3. 13. Law, as to make Christ a curse for us, he is now not only merciful and gracious, but *faithful and just to forgive us*
1 John 1. 9. *our sins*, he having set him forth *to be a propitiation for our sins, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and a justifier of him that believes in Je-*
Rom. 3. 25, 26. *sus*. It is not only that he may be just, tho' he justify sinners, or that he may justify them *saving his justice*: But it is *just with God to justify* or acquit sinners,
1 Pet. 2. 24. *Christ having born our sins on the Cross, that we through his stripes might be healed.*

I come now to shew how we are justified by Faith; and that we are justified by Faith, is evident beyond all contradiction, from that of the Apostle.
Gal. 2. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified.* So that Faith is in order to justification; and the *decree* of justification doth no more infer our justification from Eternity, than our glorification; and tho there were a foundation laid for our justification in the Death of Christ, so as it is *certainly future*: Yet we are *not actually justified* till we believe, but lie under

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the sentence of condemnation. And whatever the value of Christ's Blood might be in respect of the dignity of his person, who was God as well as Man; yet his merit was not *absolute*, but grounded upon *an Act of Sovereignty*, transferring our guilt to Christ, and his righteousness to us: And upon *the Covenant of Redemption* (as many call it) betwixt the Father and Jesus Christ, about the Salvation of sinners, the sum of which we have, *Isa.* 53. 10. God might appoint both terms and time of our participation of the benefits of Christ's Death; and it is evident that our Salvation is for a long time deferred, and the redemption of our bodies longer. Why then should it seem strange to any, that our *justification* should be deferred till we believe? And for that of justifying *the ungodly*, it is true of those whom God doth justify in a strict sense; for they cannot plead perfect Obedience. But if we take *ungodly* in the ordinary sense wherein it is taken, for an impenitent sinner: it shews what those have been whom he justifies, such they were; in this sense it is said, *the deaf hear, and the lame walk, the dumb speak, the blind see, Publicans and Harlots go into the kingdom of God*; and in that

John 3. 18.

Rom. 4. 5.

1 Cor. 6. 11.

Matth. 11. 5.

Matth. 15. 31.

Matth. 21. 31.

that very place it is ſaid, their Faith is imputed to them for righteouſneſs. Which words we need not underſtand with the Papiſts, as if Faith being a work, *That*, with other works, were imputed for righteouſneſs. Nor with ſome Proteſtants, by a *Metonimy*, for *Chriſt* (or his righteouſneſs) the object of our Faith, nor with the *Socinians*, that (by *Acceptilation*, as in the Civil Law it is called, when ſome ſmall thing is accepted inſtead of a Debt) Faith is reckoned inſtead of *perfect righteouſneſs*. As for thoſe Proteſtants that call Faith our *Evangelical Righteouſneſs*, as being that which the *Goſpel* requires, as the *Law* did perfect obedience; they do not at all ſymbolize with the *Socinians* (who do by their *Acceptilation* exclude the ſatisfaction of Chriſt) for they hold a legal righteouſneſs to be ſtill neceſſary, but lying wholly without us, as being performed by Chriſt for us, and ſo do not reckon *Evangelical righteouſneſs* to be *inſtead of that righteouſneſs, by, or for* which we are juſtified, or any part of it; but only a *means of our being inveſted therewith*. But tho I would not, as ſome do, exagitate the Phraſe, or thoſe that uſe it, while they thus explain themſelves, for (not to ſay with *Jerome*, *Severitatem eſt*) *minus Chriſtianum*

John 6. 29.

Christianum est, cum nonis sensum sanum esse alicujus ex verbis incommodè dictis statuere errorem; yet it is not *necessary* to make use of it for the interpretation of this place, there being another plain sense of it; a thing is imputed to us, when we are dealt with according thereto, as I have already said. So *Faith is imputed to us*, when we are dealt with or treated as believers; and it is imputed to us *for righteousness*, though not instead of it, or as the matter of it, but as it is a means of it, in any way whatever; as it was said before, *we have believed, that we might be justified*. As it is said, *John* Preached *the baptism of repentance for remission of sins*; or as Christ is said to be *given for a Covenant of the People*: not that he might be a Covenant (as some have rashly expounded it) as if Christ in a strict literal sense must be all in all. Whereas it was only that there might be a Covenant with the People; he being the Surety or Mediatour of it. So Faith is reckoned to us, that so we might be righteous, or might be justified, God having suspended our justification upon that. And it doth result from thence (by vertue of the Gospel Grant) as our guilt doth result from our sin by vertue of the Law; tho

Mark. 1. 4.

Isa. 42. 6.

Heb. 7. 22. 9. 15.

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I would not be thought to aſcribe the ſame cauſality to our Faith in juſtification, that I do to ſin in our Condemnation.

Now God is pleaſed to ſuſpend our Juſtification and Salvation particularly upon our believing.

1ſt. That we may return to him by the ſame way whereby we departed
Gen. 3. 6. from him. We fell from God by believing the Devil rather than God; and we are recovered again, by believing
Jo. 3. 33. God rather than the Devil, and *ſetting to our ſeal that God is true.*

2dly, God deals with us as with rational Creatures, and will not force his favour upon us, but will have us accept of it: and by Faith we receive Chriſt
Jo. 1. 12. and his benefits; and this is that be-
Act. 8. 37. lieving with all the heart which is required, when we do freely and heartily embrace that offer which is made to us
1 Tim. 1. 15. in the Goſpel; accounting the Goſpel *worthy of all acceptation.*

3dly, *It is of Faith, that it might be of*
Rom. 4. 16. *Grace*; Faith receiving all from God, as Love gives all to him; ſo that thereby we give the whole glory of our Salvation to him.

Now I come to ſhew you what matter of comfort it is, to have our Sins pardoned.

doned. Our Saviour bids the *ſick of the Palſie, be of good chear, becauſe his ſins were forgiven.* It is true, as Diſeaſes are not always cured when ſins are pardoned. (For that ſaying, that where ſin is pardoned the puniſhment is remitted, it doth not imply that all ſuffering is removed where ſin is taken away, but that what perſons ſuffer after pardon of ſin, is, not *properly Penal in the ſenſe of the Papiſts, ſo as to make up what is behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt, to ſatisfy for our ſin*;) So neither is the removal of Diſeaſes, or other Afflictions, an evidence of the pardon of ſin: but it is likely Chriſt ſpeaks not here of Pardon of ſin improperly ſo called, or the removal only of Temporal puniſhment, but of pardon in a ſtrict ſenſe; and as when the King *asked life, God gave it him, even length of days for ever and ever.* So Chriſt, *who doth exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think.* when he deſired cure for the diſeaſe of his body, cured his Soul likewiſe; which is a ſingular favour, and matter of great comfort.

Matth. 9. 2.

Pſal. 21. 4.

Eph. 3. 20.

1. It is a comfort in all our Afflictions. It is true afflictions are in themſelves part of the curſe, (as death it ſelf is) but a death having loſt its ſting, is now ours, for our advantage or gain; ſo are all

1 Cor. 3. 22. Phil 1.21. Gen 49 7. Deut. 33. 8. Rom 8. 28 2 Cor 4. 17.

all afflictions, and as *Levi's* curse was turn'd into a blessing, so are our afflictions, *working together for our good, working for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* I know some suppose that the merit of Christ being not absolute (as I said before) the law was relaxed only so far as was agreeable to God and our Mediator, and so we were delivered only from everlasting punishment, and not from temporal; but afflictions still remain properly punishments. But I think the ordinary notion of Protestants about afflictions, agrees better with the Scriptures, and so proceeding from love, they are as the

Rev. 3.19. Prov. 27. 6. Psal. 141. 5.

wounds of a friend, or rather as the smiting of the righteous, which is not for wounding, but for healing.

Eccles. 9. 7.

2. We have all our outward comforts hereby sweetned to us; *we may eat our bread with joy, and drink our wine with a merry heart, when God accepts our work.* There are two things wherein worldly men think they have the advantage of good men, that is, wisdom and joy. But

2 Tim. 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2 6. Eccles. 2. 26.

sure those that are *wise to salvation*, have the advantage of the wise men of the world, who with all their wisdom come to nought. *God gives to those that are good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge,*

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and joy, for getting and using riches, and comfort in the enjoyment of them. God doth not only fill every man's Cup, or assign him his measure of the things of this life: but he mingles their Cup as he pleases, mixing it with Sugar, or with Gall and Wormwood; so that every condition, and every outward blessing is as God is pleased to make it. And there is nothing doth more sweeten these things to us, than the sense of God's favour in the pardon of our sins, not only as we value gifts according to the mind of good will of the giver; but when our sins are pardoned, all the blessings of this life are but as the provision which *Joseph* had sent to his Father, for the way, till he should come to *Egypt*, where he should have all the good things of the Land: whereas the greatest abundance that wicked men have, is *but as the handful of Meal, and Oyl in the Cruse, which the Widow and her Son were to eat, and die.* Or like the Tyrant's Feast, to which he set the man that envied his greatness and plenty, with a great Sword hanging over his head, in an horses hair, with the point downward, which took away all the comfort of his Banquet. *Israel was not so rejoyce for joy as other People when they*

Gen. 45. 18. &c.

1 King. 14. 12.

Hos. 9. 1. *they had gone a whoring from their God*; So it is not for those to rejoyce, that have not their sins pardon'd, *but are subject to bondage continually through the fear of*
Heb. 2. 15. *death.*

3. We have freedom of access to
Rom. 5. 2. God; may come with a filial boldness to him (as a Child to a Father) *to find*
Heb. 4. 16. *mercy, and obtain grace to help in time of need*, or for seasonable helps: when ever we put up our prayers to God, the answer comes in when it may be most seasonable; as God heard not (that is, answered not) *Abraham* when he prayed; but when *Lot* was in the greatest danger, whom *Abraham* seemed to have chief
Gen. 19. 29. respect to in his Prayers. When our sins are pardoned, God may (notwithstanding the strictness of his Justice, and the severity of his Law) please himself in
Mich. 7. 18. shewing mercy, which he takes so much delight in.

4. We have the continual Feast of a good Conscience, which will be a rejoycing to us not only in the time of
2 Cor. 1. 12. affliction, but in Death it self, which is so terrible to others. As Christ bids
Job. 18. 14. his Disciples, *lift up their heads because their redemption drew nigh*, when the hearts of others failed them, for looking for the things that were coming

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upon them. It is true, a good man's Conſcience may accuſe him as to ſome particular acts, though his ſins be pardoned: *as David's did for numbering the people*; but there is proviſion made in ſuch caſes, that every particular ſin ſhall not break the peace betwixt God and us; but it is not our Conſcience accuſing us in reference to ſome *particular acts*, but in reference to our *ſpiritual ſtate*, that is ſo terrible and affrighting, when we are kept continually in a fearful expectation of judgement and fiery indignation. Luc. 21. 23, 28. 2 Sam. 24. 10. 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. Heb. 10. 30.

CHAP. IV.

NOW tho this be ſo great a privilege and happineſs, to have our ſins pardoned; if we know it not, we cannot take the comfort of it. Therefore I will further enquire, what aſſurance we have thereof by Faith. There is a great complaint that many, (if not moſt) of our later Writers and Preachers have deſerted the firſt Reformers in the Doctrine of Faith; who commonly taught, that it was a *perſuaſion or confidence of our own Salvation in particular by Chriſt*; and that every believer

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in his first believing, was to apply the promise to himself. But now it is commonly taught, that *assurance is not essential to Faith*, and that Christians may live long in the want of it. And this they say doth very much weaken the hands of Christians, there being so many graces to be acted, so many duties to be performed, so many afflictions to be endured, which do require Assurance to encourage and enable us thereto. And if those that suffered so much in the beginning of the Reformation, for the profession of the Truth, should have had such a Faith as is now ordinarily taught, and not that Assurance and confidence wherein they then pleaded the Essence of Faith, they could not have gone so well through their sufferings. Again, they say by this Doctrine, that men may have Faith without Assurance; we teach men to rest in such a Faith, and to content themselves without Assurance, and then to plead their own experience, to confirm their Doctrine, that Christians may believe sincerely, tho they have not Assurance, tho against the experience of the People of God both in the *Old* and *New Testament*, who did ordinarily profess their own Assurance of Salvation.

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Now I will not go about to justify what every particular person may say, in heat of Disputation, or when they speak of things which they have only dry notions (but no experimental knowledge) of. But for our encouraging persons to *allow* or *indulge* themselves in the want of Assurance, by saying that there may be true Faith without it, we think they have less reason for their complaint, than those have that say we weaken the hands of Christians by teaching, that perfection is not necessary to Salvation, nor attainable in this Life, because Christians generally concern themselves more to endeavour after Assurance, than after Perfection, both as it is more attainable and more necessary to the comfort of their Lives. As for the profession of the People of God in Scripture, it is not universally true of them; for as we meet with instances of many triumphing in the assurance of the love of God, and the hope of future glory; so we do of some under doubts and terrors; and as *Moses* wished (in another case) that all the Lord's People were Prophets; so I wish that all the Lord's People had Assurance: yea, I hope that if he call them to like sufferings, he will give them like Assurance,

rance, as his People had under theirs formerly; it being his ordinary way to proportion their Conſolations to their
2 Cor. 1. 5. Sufferings. Yea, we ordinarliy teach, not only that Aſſurance is attainable (without extraordinary Revelation) but that it is the Duty (as well as the Intereſt) of Chriſtians to endeavour after it.

Having premiſed thus much briefly, I will now proceed to enquire how far Faith is attended with Aſſurance, and how it may be ſometimes without it. I will not ſay, there is a *direct* Act of Faith, and a *reflex* Act: I think not the terms ſo proper; but I own, what they call the *direct* Act of Faith, is the moſt proper Act of it; and that when a man hath believed, or doth believe, he may *reflect* upon it,
Mark 6. 24. and ſay with him, *I believe*; and thence he may infer his Intereſt in the promiſe of Salvation, and ſo have Aſſurance; which ſome call Aſſurance of Faith; and we may call it ſo, as it is *inferr'd* from our Faith, rather than as it is an *act of Faith*. The Scripture ſpeaks of *a full aſſurance of*
Col. 2. 2. *underſtanding*, which is a clear and certain knowledge of Truths. Of a *full*
Heb. 6. 11. *aſſurance of hope*; that is, a certain expectation of Salvation. Of *a full aſſurance*
Heb. 10. 22. *of faith*. Now, the Aſſurance which we are now ſpeaking of, is indeed rather

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the Assurance of *Hope*, than the Assurance of *Faith*; tho it is indeed grounded on the Assurance of Faith, wherewith we should draw nigh to God, not only in particular Acts of Worship, but in our first access to him in Conversion; as the Prodigal first returned to his Father's House, and when he was received into it, made his particular Addresses to his Father, as he had occasion. And this full Assurance is not only such, as that of *Abraham*, *That what God had promised, he was able also to perform.* Nor as that of *Sarah*, *That judged him faithful that had promised.* So as he will certainly make good his promise according to the true Tenor thereof, whether we believe or no, he cannot deny himself. And *if some do not believe, their unbelief shall not make the faith of God without effect.* It shall be fulfilled to others that do believe. But there is a further Assurance of Faith (even in the first direct Act thereof) whereby we do apply the Grace of God to our selves in particular; which is not a believing that our Sins are already pardoned, or that they shall be pardoned upon our believing that they are so, but that *they shall be pardoned upon our believing*, that is, upon our addressing our selves to God by Jesus Christ, upon

Rom. 4. 21.

Heb. 11. 11.

2 Tim. 2. 12.

Rom. 3. 3.

upon our coming to him, or casting our selves upon God's free Grace in Christ. This is that *boldness and access with confidence* which we have *by the faith of him*; that boldness which we have to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus. Boldly adventuring our selves on God's free Grace in Jesus Christ for Salvation, fleeing for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is set before us, in the encouragement of the gracious invitation of the Gospel to all those that are weary and heavy laden, to those that shall desire really the Water of Life, and the promise made to such, And in confidence of the gracious promise made to all that come to Jesus Christ; that *he will in no wise cast them out*. And tho it is true, Ministers in their preaching do often make use of the example of the Lepers that sate at the gate of *Samaria*, who resolved to go into the Host of the *Syrians*, as the most likely way to save their lives, because there was no other course that they could take wherein there was any hopes of it; for if they went into the City, they should dye there; if they continued where they were, they should dye. So that if there were the least probability of saving their Lives by going to the *Syrians*, (this being the only way which did afford them a-

Ephes. 3. 12.
Heb. 10. 19.
Heb. 6. 18.
Matth. 11. 28.
Rev. 22. 18.
John 6. 37.
2 Kings 7. 3, 4.

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ny hopes) it was the wiſeſt courſe they could take. So in this caſe, there being Salvation in no other, and Unbelievers being under Condemnation; If there were but the *leaſt probability* of finding mercy through him, it would be the ſafeſt courſe that Sinners could take: They would certainly periſh if they ſhould not believe in Chriſt, and they can but periſh if they betake themſelves to him. But all this is ſpoken, not to diſcourage the hopes, or weaken the confidence of ſuch as flee to Chriſt for refuge (as if it were doubtful whether Chriſt would ſhew them mercy, or receive them to favour) but to meet with the *Scruples of Doubting Chriſtians*, that fear that Chriſt may reject them, tho we do not grant that it may be ſo, while we have his promiſe that he will not do it. Yet ſuppoſe ſuch a thing poſſible, it is acknowledged by all, that we ſhould take the *ſafeſt* way; ſo that if there were only a *poſſibility*, much more if there be a *probability* of Salvation by Chriſt, and no poſſibility thereof any other way, it is certainly the beſt way for us to betake our ſelves to him. It is in this caſe, as if a Phyſician ſhould come to a ſick Perſon, and tell him his Condition is very dangerous, and there is but one Reme-

Acts 4. 12. Mark 16. 16. John 3. 18.

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dy that will ſave his Life, but if he will make uſe of that, he doth not doubt of his recovery. The ſick Perſon is apprehenſive enough of his danger, but he hath not much confidence in this Remedy, but doubts whether it will cure him or no. His fears may be ſuch, and his Melancholly prevail ſo far, that the Phyſician can hardly hope to free him from his fears at preſent, but may think it an unanſwerable Argument to perſwade him to uſe ſuch a Remedy, that if he do not uſe it, there is no way but Death; but if he do uſe it, he may live. So, when Chriſtians are under Temptation, and the Power of Melancholly, we may more eaſily prevail with them to venture their Souls on Chriſt for Salvation, tho it ſhould be as they imagine that Chriſt *may caſt them out*, than convince them that he *will not caſt them out*. Yet we ſtand by it as a certain truth, that thoſe that come to him weary and heavy laden, ſhall find reſt to their Souls; and *that whoever believes on him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins*. And that in confidence of this promiſe *of God that cannot lie*, a Sinner may draw nigh to him with full aſſurance of Faith. And in this confidence, many are *filled with all joy and peace in believing*, even in this firſt direct act of Faith.

Acts 10. 43.

Tit. 1. 2.

Rom. 15. 13.

But it is observed, That (as we have sometimes seen a clear Morning without any Cloud, overcast and grow Dark and Gloomy; so) we have seen Clouds to darken the clearest and brightest Comforts of Christians: And we make various Conjectures at the reason of it. Sometimes thinking, that as God under the Law did so far indulge new-married persons, as to exempt them from any business (for the first year) which might occasion their absence from each other till their Affections were firmly setled, and till they were well cemented together; so God is pleased to indulge such as are newly betrothed to him, till their Affections be fixed or knit; but afterwards, tho he may retain the same kindness to them, yet he doth not make them fare deliciously every day. Sometimes we are ready to think, that they have left their first love, and so God hath withdrawn the sense of his Love from them; and several other reasons may be supposed thereof; but I question not, but the chief reason is, because they do, as I said at first, flee to Christ for refuge, in confidence of the Invitation and Promise of the Gospel; and this confidence doth for some time abide with them; but as those that fled from the wrath to come, were to *bring*

Deut. 24. 5.

Matth. 3. 8. *forth fruits meet for repentance*; ſo thoſe that have by Faith fled to Chriſt for refuge, are to bring forth fruits meet for Faith, or ſuch as may be ſuitable to Faith in Jeſus Chriſt: And having a freſh and lively ſenſe of the Love of 2 Cor. 5. 14. Chriſt, they think this ſhould conſtrain them, ſo as they ſhould for the future not live to themſelves, but to him that died for them: And *that* they ſhould be ſuch manner of Perſons in all Holy 2 Pet. 3. 11. Converſation and Godlineſs, as that for the future they think they ſhall live more like Angels than Men, and that Phil. 3. 20. *their converſation ſhall be in heaven.* But we find our ſelves to fall far ſhort of what we propounded to our ſelves, and that Rom. 7. 23. *there is a law in our members, warring*, and rebelling, *againſt the law of our minds*, ſo that we cannot do what we would; and we now begin to reflect on our Faith, and to conſider that there is a James 2. 18, *&c.* dead faith that profits not; that there is a temporary Faith, through which a man may for a time receive the word Matth. 13. 21. with joy, but afterwards fall away in Luke 8. 13. time of Temptation. And it is a *faith which works by love, which avails in Chriſt.* Gal. 5. 6. And now Doubts and Fears begin to ariſe in our hearts, leſt we ſhould deceive our ſelves. And thoſe that require Aſſurance in the direct Act of Faith, and

that we ſhould renew ſuch Acts of Faith, tho we are ſollicited by Doubts, yet acknowledg that Aſſurance will not continue without the tryal of our Faith by the inſeparable Properties of a true Saving Faith; and that we muſt examine the fruits of our Faith, and try whether we can ſhew our Faith by our Works, that we may be ſure not to be deceived in our Judgment concerning it. Now this doth well agree with what the Scripture teaches concerning Aſſurance, where the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *giving all diligence* (that is, the greateſt diligence) *to make our calling and election ſure.* He doth not mean, that this ſhould be the immediate matter of our Care and Diligence; but having exhorted them in the firſt Verſe, to give all diligence to add one Grace to another, and one degree of Grace to another, that they might not be barren or unfruitful in the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt; in this Verſe he enforces the ſame Exhortation, they ſhould the rather *give diligence to make their calling and election ſure*; that is, to the end that they might hereby make them ſure; our calling firſt, and thereby our Election. Tho the Thunder be before the Lightning, yet the Lightning gives notice of the Thunder. So, tho our

2 Peter 1. 10.

Election be from *before the foundation of*
Eph. 1.4. *the world*, yet we have first notice of it by our Calling. I know some do interpret that place otherwise than Protestants do ordinarily interpret it: because, supposing the word which is rendred to *make sure*, is rather to make *firm*, than to make *evident*: And looking upon Election as *conditional*, or suspended on something to be performed by us; they reckon that it becomes absolute, and so sure to us upon our diligence. But as we are not chosen if we
Eph. 1.4. be holy, but that we may be holy; so the word here used, doth not only signify making a thing firm, but evident,
Heb. 9. 17. or giving evidence of the truth of it.
Mark 16. 20. And whereas they say, our calling is a
Heb. 2. 3, 4. thing so evident, there needs no such diligence for the making of that sure. I answer, If our Calling were nothing, but making us Christians by outward Profession, it might be easily known; but this is not the Calling that will prove our Election: *For there are but*
Matth. 20. 16. *few chosen of those that are thus called.* But there is another Calling spoken of in Scripture, which is termed Effectual Calling, because men hearken to that Calling, and come in at it; and this is inseparable from Predestination,
Rom. 8. 30. Justification, and Glorification. And it requires

quires much diligence to know this. So if we would have full assurance of Hope, or a confidence of future Glory, it must be by diligence, and *following those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises.* For those words in the close of the Verse, may either be referred to our shewing the same diligence, or to the words, the *full assurance of Hope*; we must persevere in our diligence, if we would maintain the assurance of our Hope. We do not say as the Papists, (at least, in their sense) that Faith is necessary to the beginning of our Justification, but Works to the continuance of it; for they suppose, that they that are once justified, may cease so to be, and fall again under Condemnation. But we may justly say, That tho the beginning of our Assurance be from Faith in the direct act of it, yet the continuance of it must be from Works; for we shall have too much ground to suspect that our Faith is not an unfeign'd Faith, *or the Faith of Gods elect*, if it do not work by love.

Heb. 6. 11, 12.

1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1 5. Tit. 1. 1.

It is further evident, That Assurance must be maintained by Reflection, or Self-Examination, because the Apostle makes that to be the scope of his Epistle, That those *who believe on the name of the*

Son of God, may know that they have eter-
1 John 5. 13. *nal life*; and may ſtill believe, or be confirmed in their Faith. If any doubt what thoſe things are that he refers to; doubtleſs, they are not the things immediately going before, but the Epiſtle in general: In ſeveral places of which he ſhews what doth evidence a ſtate of Salvation, and what is inconſiſtent therewith, as *Ch.* 1. 6, 7. *Ch.* 2. 3, 15. *Ch.* 3. 14. *Ch.* 5. 1, 4.

Now, after all this, ſome are unſatisfied with this way of attaining Aſſurance, or rather maintaining it, as being neither ſatisfactory nor neceſſary; and it ſeems to found our Aſſurance and Comfort on ſomething in *our ſelves*. For this laſt Objection, (to diſpatch it in few words) As fruit, tho it grow *from* the Root, yet *grows* upon the Branches; ſo tho all our Hope and Comfort be originally from the Grace of God, yet this manifeſting it ſelf in its effects, we may comfort our ſelves in what God hath wrought in our ſelves, as well as rejoice in behalf of others, when we
2 John 4. ſee them walking in truth, or ſee in them thoſe *things that accompany Salvation*, or have Salvation following on
Heb. 6. 9. them. And if any ſay, this may ſuffice for a Judgment of Charity, which is all that is required of us in reference to

others; but it is not ſufficient to that judgment of certainty which we ſhould have concerning our ſelves. This will receive an anſwer from what I have to ſay upon the two other exceptions.

Now whereas it is ſaid, that this way of ſelf-examination leaves Chriſtians at great uncertainty about their Spiritual Eſtate; and the evidences that are uſually given for ſatisfying them, are not ſo convincing, but Chriſtians are perplexed ſtill with fears and doubts. I anſwer,

That we ſhould not go to Miniſters either in hearing, or reading, or conferring, as *Naaman* went to the Prophet to be cured of his Leproſie, expecting that he ſhould do it with a word of his mouth, and a ſtroke of his hand. We cannot expect that they ſhould preſently reſolve us about our Spiritual condition; but there is much *diligence* to be uſed by our ſelves, as there is in all things of any worth, which are difficult. As this deſerves our diligence, ſo it requires our diligence, not only for the tryal of our Grace, but for the exerciſe of it. It is obſerved by ſome, that Chriſtians in our days have not ordinarily that Aſſurance which others have had in former times: and I doubt the obſervation may be true:

2 King. 5. 11.

but I think it proceeds not so much from any *error about the nature of Faith*, as from *decay in Grace*, and that manifest declining that there is in the practice of Religion; and it is no wonder that professors of Religion are such strangers to Assurance, and Spiritual Comfort, while there is such a manifest difference betwixt the Christians of these days, and of former times; and I desire that the words of one suspected by none to derogate from the Grace of God, or the operations of his Spirit in reference to man's Salvation, may be diligently heeded. *It is* (saith he) *impossible that many professors whom we see and converse withal, should have any solid peace with God. It is a fruit that will not grow on an earthly selfish frame of mind and conversation. God forbid but that our utmost diligence and continued endeavours to thrive in every Grace, should be required thereunto.*

Now in this case, I neither think it so *easy* a matter as some do to attain Assurance, nor such an *impossibility* as others do. Some Learned Men think that Assurance doth generally accompany saving Faith, because they suppose the Soul must needs know its own acts, and so must necessarily know when it believes, and when it repents,

and

and consequently infer its own Justification. But tho it be easy to know our own acts considered *Physically* or *Naturally*, that is, when we put forth such an act in general, as when we believe, or repent, or know God; yet it is another thing to know our own acts *morally* considered, or as they ought to be qualified in order to such ends as they are appointed to. There may be a Faith which is but temporary, or for a season; there may be a repentance like that of *Nineveh*, which may avail to the preventing of temporal Judgments, but not to Salvation. There may be such a knowledge, *whereby we do not know things as we ought to know them*: so we may only *profess that we know God*. But we must know that we know him, by our Obedience as the fruit or effect thereof: so it requires search and self-examination, to know *whether we are in the Faith*, or in the state of true believers. But on the other hand, some suppose it *impossible* to attain Assurance by reflecting upon any thing in our selves as an evidence of God's special Grace or favour towards us: and that they may wholly disable Christians for inferring any Assurance from any thing in themselves, they deny both propositions from whence they should draw

Mat. 13. 21.

1 Cor. 8. 2. Tit. 1. 16.

1 Jo. 2. 3. Jer. 22. 16.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

their conclusion. For example, we say, that *those who love the brethren are passed from Death to Life.* By reflecting upon our selves, we add further, that we love the brethren, thence we conclude that we are passed from death to life. Now these men with whom we have now to do, deny both the Propositions; that is, they deny we know that we our selves are passed from death to life, by our love to the brethren; making this to be rather a ground of a judgment of Charity concerning others, than a judgment of certainty concerning our selves; for we may surely make a better judgment of our own love to the brethren, than of the love of others; only they think a judgment of Charity may suffice towards others; but we are now speaking of Assurance of our own love; but in this argument they insist on the second Proposition, denying absolutely that we can know our own love to the brethren, or at least that Christians can ordinarily know it, there being so many properties of it which it is hardly possible for any Christian to find in himself: but further, we must know them to be brethren (they say) otherwise Papists or any sort of persons love those of their own way, looking upon them

1 Jo. 3. 14.

1 Cor. 13. 4, &c.

as brethren. Yea, we see such Divisions, and Animosities, and mutual Exacerbations among Christians, as it seems impossible either to attain to a judgment of Charity concerning others hereby, or to a judgment of certainty concerning our selves.

Now in answer to these things, I say first, That however Christians, or Christian Graces may be described in their own nature, and as they should be; yet when we consider them as they are ordinarily found, there is an allowance to be made for human frailty: as *Hezekiah* prays *that God would pardon every one that prepared his heart to seek him*, tho he were not *cleansed according to the Purification of the Sanctuary*; that is, if they had endeavoured to bring their hearts into a right frame, tho they did not reach to that purity which was in strictness required. He may indeed speak there of legal or ritual Purification, but that was strictly enjoined then. There are indeed several sorts of persons that plead for Perfection, but none of them for absolute Perfection, as necessary to Salvation. Grace must be sincere, and of the right kind, tho it may not reach to that degree which is our duty (for if perfection were not our duty, our imperfections were no sins). Gold must hold at the

2 Chron. 30. 18, 19.

the touchstone, though it may not hold at the balance without some grains of allowance. If we will deal plainly and faithfully with our own hearts, we may appeal to God for the sincerity of our love to our brethren, as *Peter* did for the sincerity of his love to Christ, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. And if our hearts condemn us not, we may have confidence towards God.*

Jo. 21. 17.

1 Jo. 3. 21.

2*dly*, Brethren may deal unkindly with each other, when they meet in the dark, or when they meet with each other in disguise: that is, through ignorance Christians may mistake their brethren, or those that are their brethren may sometimes appear unlike themselves. But where it is true love, it is not to those of our own way or opinion only; it is not proportionable to what they resemble us in, but according to their measure of Holiness, wherein they are like to God: where love is right, Christians love others more that are eminent in Grace and Holiness, tho differing in their judgments from us, than those that are of our mind and way in some things of less importance, but more defective in the more essential parts of Religion.

3*dly*, There may be differences among Christians, where there is a sincere love

to each other; and the more zeal they have for the Truth, and the Service of God, the greater their differences may be. As differences may sometimes happen in Families, betwixt persons that have an entire Affection to each other, and these differences being about things that do nearly concern their Family, as about the government and management of their Children; the greater their Affection is towards their Children, or care for them, the warmer are their debates about them. Thus it happens among Christians that cannot be of one mind in things pertaining to the Honour and Service of God; the greater their zeal is, the greater are their differences: and however Christian prudence and meekness should make us forbear each other in love, yet that perfection is not found among Christians, as always to make them carry it with due Calmness, Tenderness, and Moderation to each other. We have an Example in *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two excellent Persons, and dear Companions in Labours and Sufferings for Christ: yet they were exasperated so against each other, that they parted and went several ways, tho the thing which they parted about seems to be of no great moment. Act. 15. 36. &c.

I may

I may not ſtand to examine particular objections, which they make againſt other evidences of ſaving Grace: But conſider what proviſion they make for the ſaisfying of Chriſtians concerning their Spiritual ſtate. The Apoſtle's *power was given him not for deſtruction, but for edification.* We ſhould at leaſt, if we deſtroy the foundations on which Chriſtians build their hopes and comfort, teach them whereon they ſhould build them. Now for this they ſend them to that Spirit which is ſo oft called the Comforter, who doth as they ſuppoſe ſpeak particularly in the heart of a Believer, *Son be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee*; and when the Spirit ſaith this to the Soul, this ſilences all objections which did before diſturb and diſquiet it. I know God can when he pleaſes ſatisfy the Soul, ſo as there ſhall no doubt remain to trouble our ſpirits: but tho he that is awake may know certainly that he is ſo, and that he is not in a Dream: yet he that is in a dream may verily think that he is awake. So he that hath the witneſs of the Spirit, may certainly know that it is no deluſion: but he that is under a deluſion, may verily think that he hath the teſtimony of the Spirit. Therefore that we may not miſtake in this mat-

2 Cor. 13. 10.

ter, they ſay the Spirit of God never ſpeaks to the heart of any believer, but it ſpeaks according to the word of Grace revealed; and ſo I believe. But I know not well how to reconcile it to what was before objected, againſt our inferring our Juſtification from our Love to the Brethren. For if we cannot find in our ſelves that Love which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, all is nothing without it; therefore it is hard to receive any Teſtimony concerning our Spiritual eſtate, where we have not ground to believe that we have this Love in us, notwithſtanding the many properties of it which are there added. Far be it from me to derogate from the work of the Spirit in ſatisfying and comforting troubled Souls, whoſe comforts are my greateſt hope in the time of trouble, and at the hour of death. I am not of thoſe that the Philoſopher ſpeaks of, that meaſure Vertue by themſelves, and think none attain to that which themſelves have not attained to: therefore will not deny any ſuch way of Aſſurance as I have not had experience of. I deſire (without the offence of thoſe, in compariſon with whom I think of my ſelf as the Spies did *when they ſaw the Giants*, Numb. 13. 33.) to ſpeak my mind

1 Cor. 13. 3.

mind in this matter, after long search and often renewed thoughts. I question not but God can speak, or communicate himself to our spirits, as Angels do to each other: yea, I am fully satisfied, that he doth thus speak Peace to his people at the hour of death, or before, or after some great Conflict or Temptation: as those may know that have either conversed with serious experienced Christians, or but read the Lives and Deaths of Martyrs, or sufferers for Christ. Such may observe what sudden transports of joy eminent Christians have sometimes had, which have not been the effect of more strict Tryal, and Examination of their spiritual Estate by the Word of God, which they have not had freedom and presence of mind for, under such Fears, Pains, Bodily-weakness, as they have laboured under: much less from any briskness of spirits, or working of fancy: but it must be imputed to God's immediate support, *putting Gladness into their hearts, shedding abroad his love in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost given to them.* But to suppose this to be God's *ordinary way* of dealing with his People, and to allow them *no Assurance* but what God gives them in such an *immediate way*, would leave many,

Ps. 4. 7.

Rom. 5. 5.

humble ſerious Chriſtians, (that dare not boaſt of what God hath not wrought in them) under perpetual doubts and fears. And becauſe many are ready to think that what the Scripture ſpeaks about the witneſs of the Spirit, the ſeal of the Spirit, and the earneſt of the Spirit, do imply ſome immediate way of the Spirit, communicating himſelf to Chriſtians: I will endeavour to ſhew you what may be the true and proper import of ſuch Expreſſions.

As for that, the Spirit's witneſſing with our ſpirits, or to our ſpirits, *that we are the Children of God*, ſuppoſing what I before ſaid about his immediate Comforts in extraordinary Tryals and Temptations, which ſeems to be the ſtate of Chriſtians at that time; the Spirit may ordinarily be ſaid to witneſs with our ſpirit, or to our ſpirit. Rom. 8. 16.

1ſt, With our ſpirit; and for the clearing of this, we muſt conſider, that whatever is written in Scripture, is the Teſtimony of the Spirit, he doth therein teſtify; and it is ſaid particularly, that *the Holy Ghoſt is a witneſs to us* of the perfection of Chriſt's Sacrifice; and this he is in the Scripture, or what he hath there teſtified, as is 1 Pet. 1. 11. Heb. 10. 15.

evident

evident from the words following. Now it no where saith in Scripture, that this or that person is the Son of God; our Names may be written in Heaven, but not in the Scripture: so it is said to testify of Christ, but not by Name; but describing him by his works, which *verse* 36. are said to testify of him, or
Joh. 3. 39. *to bear witness that his Father had sent him*: these put together, the testimony of the Scripture, and his own works, did witness that he was the *Messiah*. Thus the Spirit of God witnesses in general who are the Sons of God; giving Characters whereby they may be known, as *walking after the Spirit*, *loving the Brethren*, *&c.* This we know by the Spirit of God speaking in the word: but that we do these things, we know by our own spirits, which we must appeal to, and examine about it, this being the Candle of the Lord which searches the hidden parts of the
Prov. 20. 27. belly, that is, our most secret thoughts,
2 Cor. 1. 12. and the witness thereof is the testimony of our Consciences; therefore if we would have the witness of the Spirit, we must see in the Scripture what that witnesses about those that shall be saved, and then consult our own spirits, and if we find those things in our selves that do accompany Salvation,

he Conclusion follows, that we shall be saved.

But further, it may be said to witness *to or with our* spirits, as it witnesses in *its effects*, which the Spirit it self may be properly said to do: things are said to witness in Scripture, when they are a real proof of any thing, as *the rust of Silver and Gold witnesseth against the owners.* So mens wickedness saith, or testifies, *that they have no fear of God before their Eyes.* So persons are said to testify or bear witness by their Works, as the Holy Ghost is a witness of Christ's Exaltation, by the Miracles which he wrought; and *God did bear the Apostles witness both with signs and wonders, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost*: and thus the Spirit bears witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God, by that filial frame or Spirit of Adoption *which he puts in us.* And by bringing forth in us the fruits of the Spirit, *he reveals his Son in us. We knowing that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

Jam. 5. 3. Psal. 36. 1. Act. 5. 32. Heb. 2. 4. Ezek. 36. 27. Gal. 1. 16. 1 Jo. 3. 24.

I will now proceed to speak of the *sealing* of the Spirit; and I desire this may be observed, that whenever the Scripture speaks thereof, it doth not speak of the Covenant, or of our Salvation being sealed to us: but of *our be-*

2 Cor. 1. 22 Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30.

ing sealed. Now we must know, that a Seal is not a Natural, but an Instituted Sign: and it being a particular mark belonging to some person, it signifies his ratifying or confirming any thing that it is applied to. And Seals were used in three Cases: *1st.* For the confirming of Writings, being an Evidence of a man's consent to what he

Esth 3 12. hath set his Seal to. *2dly*, It is for keep-

Jer. 32. 10. ing a thing sure, as the *Lyons Den*, and

Dan. 6. 17. Christ's Sepulchre, not by force; Wax is not proper for that; but for securing it so as none can meddle with it but it will be known. *3dly*, It was used for marking things that they might be known to whom they did belong, and to distinguish them from other mens; and they did not only mark things or Goods, but Persons. We read in *Heathen* Authors, as *Plutarch* in *Nicias*, that they did sometimes mark their Captives or Servants in the Forehead. And hence probably the Scripture speaks so oft of Marking and Sealing the Ser-

Ezek. 9. 4. vants of God; so the Beast is said to

Rev. 7. 3, mark those that did enjoy any privi-

4. 9. 4. leges under him. Thus when *God doth*

Rev. 13. 16. *set apart* any for himself, as *David* ex-

Ps. 4. 3. presses it, he seals them, or marks them for his own. And as the Emperors had not only their Superscrip-

ion, but their Image impreſſed on their Coin; ſo God impreſſes his own Image on his People, or renews them after his own Image. Matth. 22. 20. Col. 3. 10.

And if it be ſaid, That they were ſealed with the Holy Spirit of Promiſe *after they believed*; as if it were not the Impreſſion of the Image of God upon us at our firſt Converſion, but ſome work of the Spirit afterwards.

I anſwer, Thoſe that make this ſealing to be the confirming or aſſuring our Juſtification and Salvation to us, ſuppoſe it is done at our firſt believing in the direct Act of Faith: So, if they make this Objection, let them Anſwer it themſelves. I add, that this is not an Act finiſhed in a moment, as a Seal may be ſet upon Wax; but a Progreſſive Work, and the Impreſſion is made clear and deeper by degrees: We *being changed into his image from glory to glory.* And laſtly, The *Greeks* take much liberty in the change of their Tenſes, and there is the ſame Tenſe uſed here, which is uſed where it is ſaid, *he that believes ſhall be ſaved.* 2 Cor. 3. 18. Mark 16. 16.

I will now add ſomething briefly about the earneſt of the Spirit, which the Scripture ſpeaks ſometimes of. By the laſt of which places it is evident, 2 Cor. 1. 22. Chap. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 14.

that

that by the earnest of the Spirit, he means the Spirit as an earnest, *as the sign of Circumcision* is Circumcision for a Sign. Some take the word (which is borrowed from the *Eastern* Languages) in a large sense, for a *pledge*, *pawn*, or *earnest*; but in this case it is properly rendred *earnest*; for there is a great difference betwixt a Pawn, or Pledge, and an Earnest: The former is something deposited or left with another for securing what hath been taken up or borrowed; and it is something of another kind, and of greater (or at least equal) Value with what it is left in pawn for. But an earnest is something given at the making of a Bargain, for the ratifying and confirming of it; and it is of the same kind with what is afterwards to be paid, and but a small part of it. Now we can have *no Pledge* of future Glory, there being nothing of equal value to it; but God gives us his Spirit, or as he doth sometimes express it, *of his Spirit*; of the Gifts and Graces of it; and this is the *Earnest* of our Inheritance, Grace differing from Glory in degree only, not in kind: As here we know *but in part*, *but then shall know as we are known*; and as our Knowledg, so our Love and Joy shall then be perfected; and what we receive

Rom. 4. 11.

1 John 3. 24. Chap. 4. 13.

1 Cor. 13. 9, 12.

here of the Spirit, doth assure us of receiving the full sum of the Glory promised. And as the Earnest that we receive at the making of a Bargain, doth not only confirm the Bargain, but is of some *Use* to us at present, tho it be but a small part of the whole; so those Graces of the Spirit which he here works in us, are (in the exercise thereof) our greatest Comfort and Happiness in this World, and are Prelibations and Foretasts of our Future Happiness, and are therefore called *the first fruits of the Spirit*; being a small part of the full Harvest of Glory, which we shall reap hereafter. In short, We do *by the Spirit of God know the things that are freely given to us of God:* He enabling us to *discern Spiritual things*, and to make a right Judgment of them; *renewing us in the spirit of our minds*, as well as in our inferior Faculties; so, that as there is a saving work upon the whole Soul, which we are to make a Judgment of, there is likewise Knowledg and Judgment, or *Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding*, to determine concerning our Spiritual Estate: As those of full Age *by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* But that *communion of the holy ghost* which the Apostle prays might be with

Phil. 1. 6.

Rom. 8. 23.

1 Cor. 2. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Ephes. 4. 23.

Phil. 1. 9. Col. 1. 9.

Heb. 5. 14.

all

2 Cor. 13. 14. all the *Corinthians*, and so with all Believers, whereby he communicates to us all those good things which Christ hath obtained for us, is known only to those humble and circumspect Christians which love God, and give proof of it by *keeping his Commandments*. So that as it is the Blessing of the Lord that *makes rich*; *yet the hand of the diligent: the blessing of the Lord* going along with our diligence. So it is by the Spirit of God, that we know the things given to us of God; yet by giving all diligence, we make our Calling and Election sure; the Spirit of God both exciting us to, and assisting us in the exercise of Grace, and encouraging such diligence by Spiritual Comforts. And as those that *do his will, shall know of the doctrine whether it was of God, or whether he spake of himself.* So they shall know the Work which they find in themselves, whether it be from moral Principles, fleshly Wisdom, restraining Grace, or from renewing Grace, and so of those *things that accompany Salvation.*

John 16. 15.

John 14. 23.

Prov. 10. 4, 22.

John 7. 17.

Heb. 6. 9.

CHAP. V.

THAT I may do something towards the helping of Christians in the trial of their Spiritual state, I will first premise some general Observations.

1st, Some persons may have much advantage of others before their Conversion, and by reason of Natural Temper, Fleshly Wisdom, Education, Restraining Grace, or other things which keep them from the Polutions of the World, and bring them to a form of Godliness. Now it will be harder for such to judge of their Spiritual state, than for others. Sometimes the Nights are light by reason of the Moon shining; and it is not so easy then to discern whether it be Day: Yea, if the fore-part of the Night be dark, and the Moon rise before morning, a man may think it Day before it is so: and having found his error, he may (that he may not be deceived again) be backward to believe that it is Day, when it is really so. In like manner some may (as I said) be free from the more gross Follies and Vanities of Youth; others may have been Profane and Wicked in their Younger Years; but through some Affliction, or

ſome ſpecial Providence of God, or happening into ſome Religious Family, or into ſome place where the Word of God is Zealouſly and Faithfully Preached, their Conſciences are awakened, and they leave thoſe ſins which formerly they lived in, and there is a great change wrought in them, but not a ſaving change: this is but as the light of the Moon before Day; hereby they may be deceived into a falſe opinion of their own ſtate; and when they come to ſee their own miſtake, may be more backward to believe a real thorough change in themſelves when it is wrought. There have been thoſe that have dated their Converſion after they have not only done much, but ſuffered much in the ſervice of Chriſt.

2*dly*, It may ſo happen, that perſons may at ſome times ſeem better or worſe than they are. We are upbraided by ſome for painting Hypocrites, or ſhewing what they may attain to, ſo as to repreſent them better than we can ordinarily find ſincere Chriſtians to be. And on the other hand in ſpeaking of the Infirmities of the Saints, we make them worſe than moſt Hypocrites. But as the Wiſe-man complains of it as a vanity upon the Earth, that there *be juſt men to whom it happens according to the*

work of the wicked, and wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous; So it is in their Morals; if we read 2 *Sam.* 11. we ſhould judge (looking no further) that *David* was a grievous Apoſtate, conſidering what profeſſion he had before made, which we may eaſily ſee in the 34. and 63. *Pſalms*, and that he had now ſung away care, that there was no fear of God before his eyes: but we ſee afterwards by the 51. *Pſalm*, that the root of the matter was in him, and his Grace did again flouriſh. We have other inſtances in Scripture, as *Aſa*, *Peter*. 2 *Chron.* 16. *Matt.* 26. 70, 74. And on the other hand, we ſee what account *Paul* gives of himſelf, Tho he was then *in the gall of bitterneſs and the bond of iniquity*, and reckoned that he was then *the chief of ſinners*. So that in judging our ſelves or others, we muſt uſe much caution, and have reſpect not to our preſent frame or practice as it may be at ſome times, but to what is the ordinary habitual frame of our hearts, or courſe of our lives. Gold may ſometimes be ſo ſullied with ruſt and duſt, as it may look worſe than Copper doth ordinarily; and on the other hand, Copper may be ſo burniſhed and embelliſhed, that it may look

Eccleſ. 8. 14.

Phil. 3. 5, 6.

more bright, and give a greater luſtre than moſt Gold doth. So that there is required both judgment and attention of mind, to diſtinguiſh the one from the other.

3*dly*, We muſt have reſpect to natural temper in judging our ſelves or others. As it is ſaid, A little Sugar will ſerve for ſweet Wine; and a little Grace makes much more ſhew in ſome than in others: it is true, all are defiled by original ſin. But whether there be, as the Philoſopher ſays, a certain Genius (as I may ſpeak) or diſpoſition to vertue, or rather ſomething like vertue; ſome mens natural temper is quick, and ſoon moved; others are as Doves or Lambs in their natural temper; but meekneſs in theſe Creatures not being from choice and judgment, is no vertue in them. In judging our ſelves, we muſt conſider how Grace falls in with Nature, or how it ſtrives againſt it. A gentle gale with the Tide or Stream, may make good riddance: but it muſt be a brisk gale to carry a Veſſel againſt them. One undertaking to tell what mens natural temper was, by his skill in Phyſiognomy, he being asked what he thought of a certain perſon, ſaid, he was of a very ill temper, and natural diſpoſition: thoſe preſent, derided him

ſo

for being ſo miſtaken in his conjecture, they looking upon him as a perſon of ſuch an excellent temper. But he himſelf did vindicate the man, and told them he had judged right; for his natural temper was very bad, but he had corrected it by Philoſophy. Now there might be more of moral vertue in him, than in *Veſpatian*, who for the ſweetneſs of his Nature, was called the Darling of mankind. A little Grace will make a great ſhew in ſome Natures, when a far greater meaſure will make but a little ſhew in others, where it hath no help from Nature.

4thly, We muſt conſider the circumſtances wherein perſons are; what are their temptations on one hand, and their advantages on the other hand. Some enjoy more health than others, when it is not becauſe they have ſtronger bodies, or are of a more hail conſtitution; but it is by reaſon of their circumſtances; one can command his buſineſs, and that he goes out only at ſeaſonable times, or he is ſo accommodated as to ſecure himſelf againſt the injury of the weather; they work only ſo as may be for their health, and need not tire themſelves, or over-heat themſelves: they have wholſome Diet, and they have Cordials by them, to relieve

or fortify Nature when it is too hard put to it. And by these means, those who are more weakly, prevent sickness; whereas others (tho they be naturally stronger) are forced to be out at all hours, in all weathers, to endure heats and colds, eat and drink what they can get, have little wholesome diet; if they ayl any thing, have no Cordials or Remedies at hand to help themselves. So it is with men in respect of their Souls; some have a competent Estate, and are put neither upon the temptations of adversity, nor prosperity: while others (through straits in their Estates) are put upon mean things, and sometimes upon sinful shifts. And others are rich, and in great places; and others are hardly able to judge of their temptations, how hard it is to be high in the World, and not high-minded; to exercise sobriety and temperance in plenty and abundance. Some have little to do in the World, abroad or at home, in trading or in their Families; have few to deal with, few Children or Servants; others must go into all companies, converse with all sorts of persons, meet with provocations from some, temptations from others to comply with their sinful humours for their own advantage: they

may have unfaithful Servants, undutiful Children, and so more trial of their Grace, more exercise for it, and so may discover some weakness of Grace, tho not the want of it. So some may have the advantage of good conversation, may live in good Families or Neighbourhoods, where they have good examples to provoke them to love and to good works, and are oft called upon and admonished if they fail in any thing: they may live under a lively Ministry, whose Sermons may be *as nails to fasten*, *as goads* to excite or quicken; they may have good books to read, and time and opportunity to read them, which is a great help to Christians: whereas on the other hand, some persons are cast into prophane places, or Families, or company, where they meet with those that will be drawing and enticing them to sin, scoffing at them, threatning, discouraging them; and it may be such as they have some dependance upon: they seldome hear an awaking Sermon, or *sound doctrine*, such as may breed good nourishment; or such discourse as *may minister grace to the hearers*; seldom meet with a good book, or it may be if they do, cannot read it. It is true, we must hold fast Christ's Name, and not deny his Faith, even *where Satan dwells*; *and hath*

Eccles. 12. 11.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Ephes. 4. 29.

Rev. 2. 13. *his seat.* But we cannot expect that Grace should thrive much under such Discouragements and Disadvantages.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall proceed yet further, to shew how Christians that are sincere may be distinguished from others, tho they have their sinful Infirmities. We sometimes observe Persons of Good Families reduced to straits, and go meanly; but yet, if they come to beg at our Doors, if we meet them in Company, we see something in them which bewrays or discovers what they are, either in their Gesture, Speech, Civility. So those that are born of God, it may be in shew or appearance fall far below their Rank, they may have sinful Infirmities; they may find Evil present with them when they would do good; they may be led Captive to the Law of Sin which is in their Members; they may not do the Good which they would, but the Evil which they would not; but yet the Spirit lusts against the Flesh, they hate the Evil which they do; they would do the Good which they do not; they bewail their Bondage to Sin; long to be delivered from the Body of Death, and

Rom. 7. 15, &c.

are thankful that they are so far delivered from it by Jesus Christ. These things, I confess, discover our Spiritual State chiefly to our selves, but it is that which I would help Christians in. Again, you may observe a difference betwixt Persons that are nice and neat in their Nature and Temper, and those that take care only to make a good shew. The former would not only appear neat outwardly, but they are uneasy if they have any thing about them which is not neat and cleanly. Again, tho they may think themselves more obliged to go according to their Rank when they are Abroad, or in Company, yet you shall never surprize them in any sordid or unhandsome Dress. The latter care not what they wear, so they have something that is fine to cast over all: Their Natures will bear sordidness and nastiness, if they can hide it; and if they can appear Fine abroad, care not what they wear at home. So sincere Christians *take heed to their spirits*, and pray daily that God would *create in them a clean heart, and renew in them a right spirit.* Their *secret sins* are a trouble and burden to them. They would especially *let their light shine so before men, that seeing their good works, they may glorify their father which is in heaven.* But

Matth. 2. 15. Psalm 51. 10. Psalm 19. 12. Matth. 5. 16.

yet they will walk in the midst of their Houses with a perfect heart; carry themselves amongst Servants and Children, as remembring that they are under the eye of God, and should be Examples of Holiness to those under their own Charge. Whereas others are like *painted Tombs*, and *whited Sepulchres*, *which within are full of rottenness and dead mens bones*. So they put on their best Dress when they go out, that they may make a fair shew before others; but surprize them at home, when they do not study their Carriage, and they are quite other manner of Persons, and care not how they appear in their own Families before their Servants and Children. Again, We may observe, That some Persons have *Tertian* or *Quartan* Agues; on the intermitting days they are ordinarily as well as other Persons; but we must not therefore conclude when we see them well, that they have lost their Ague, or are cured; for when the Fit-day comes, they are as bad again as ever; yet he that is cured, may once in a long time, perhaps on occasion (if he have some way neglected or disorder'd himself) have some remembrance of his Ague (as we speak) in a Fit and away. So in this case we sometimes

Psal 101. 2.
Matth. 23. 27.
Luke 11. 44.

see Persons abstain from Sin, and carry themselves very well for some time together; but this is only an Intermission, they have been kept from Temptations or Occasions of Sin; but when they meet with an Occasion or Temptation, they are the same Persons that they were, and so *toties quoties* (as we say) as oft as they meet with occasion, they fall again into Sin; these are not cured; but those that are freed from their Disease, may perhaps at some time be overtaken with Sin, and we cannot determine how oft; but if the general tenor of their Lives be as becomes the Gospel, tho they do Sin, they *have an Advocate with the Father.* 1 John 2. 1.

CHAP. VII.

I Will now shew you some Characters whereby you may make some Judgment of your Spiritual State. And amongst many which others lay down, I shall insist only on some few, which are most easy to be discerned in our selves. I never study to speak (I will not say, all that may be said, but) all that I can say on any Subject, remembring that of the Orator, *Dictis est electio & modus*; for tho I reckon not my self among

Learned

Learned men, yet I would follow them at a distance. And,

1. Observe what it is that you are chiefly guided by in the general course of your Life. What we chiefly mind, doth influence us in all the passages of our Lives: *And they that are after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh; and they that* Rom. 8. 5. *are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* That is, those in a Natural state chiefly mind, that is, savour and relish, set their affections on, are taken up in the pursuit of carnal things. The same word is used, *Matth.* 16. 23. *Phil.* 3. John 3. 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 2. So those *that are born of* Rom. 8. 1. *the spirit, walk after the spirit*; are led by the Spirit, Savour, and Relish, set their Affections on, seek after Spiritual things. Now let us examine what it is that doth chiefly influence us in the several turnings of our lives. We consider what will stand with, what will chiefly further that which is our great concernment; not what should be so, but what we really make so. In chusing Callings or Imployments, Relations, Places of abode, let us consider what we look chiefly at, what sways us most therein; whether we chuse such a Calling, or way of Life, which will most advance us in the World, wherein we are most like to get great Estates, to

live at Eaſe, in Pleaſure; or whether in our choice we conſider rather what will moſt help us, or leaſt hinder us in the way to Heaven; where we are like to meet with feweſt Temptations. I deny not, but we may conſider how to live, ſo as we may be in a capacity *to give rather than to receive*; *That we may walk honeſtly towards them that are without, having lack of nothing: but may pay every one their own, and be burdenſome to none.* But that which we ſhould, and ſhall ſeek in the firſt place, if our hearts be right within us, *is the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs.* Not for worldly advantage, chuſing for our ſelves, or ours, ſuch Imployments or Callings as may take up our time, ſo as we cannot *wait upon the Lord without diſtraction*; or which may caſt us upon Temptations to exceſs, man-pleaſing, or other like Sins, which may deprive us of the benefit of the Ordinances of God, and force us to live amongſt Idolaters or Heathens. If any ſay, ſome muſt follow ſuch Callings; leave them to ſuch as mind earthly things, and govern themſelves thereby. So it is in chuſing Relations; Let Perſons deal plainly and faithfully with themſelves, and they may know what it is that makes Matches for them, by their choice therein:

Acts 20. 35. 1 Theſ. 4. 12.

Matth. 6. 33.

1 Cor. 7. 35.

therein: We may see (to allude to the
Joshua 24. 15. words of *Joshua*) *whom they chuse to serve*, Whether their God is their Belly, and they chuse to live at Ease, and in Pleasure; whether they be covetous Idolaters, and look chiefly after great Estates; whether they do as those that
Luke 14. 7. *chuse chief rooms at feasts*; Crowding to get as high as they can, to get as near as may be towards the upper end of the World. I allow it to be not only lawful, but prudent, for Persons (so far as they can) to match within their own Rank; But as our Saviour saith in another case, *These things ought ye to have*
Matth. 23. 23. *done, and not to leave the others undone.* God in Judgment oft leaves Persons to their own choice, so that they that will be rich, shall be so; and those that seek Glory from men, shall have it. But where Men or Women set their Faces stedfastly to go to Heaven (to allude to those words, *Luke 9. 51.*) they will consider what help or encouragement they shall meet with in the way thither; Considering what the Apostle
1 Cor. 7. 39. means by *marrying only in the Lord*; with one that is going the same way with us, whose Examples, Counsels, Prayers, we may have the help of, and with whom we may walk hand in hand to
1 Peter 3. 7. Heaven, *as being heirs together of the same*
grace

grace of life. So in chuſing Services, what is it that you chiefly propound to your ſelves? Thoſe that are moſt intent on profit, will inquire what Wages, what Vails, what Way of improving what they have; what Work for wearing and tearing their Cloaths: If Perſons chiefly mind their Eaſe and Pleaſure, their enquiry is what Houſe they keep, what work they hold their Servants to, what liberty they give, what merry Company there is in the Family, or in the Neighbourhood. But thoſe that mind heavenly things, will conſider what help or furtherance they may have therein, whether God be ſerved or worſhipped in the Family, what Miniſtry or Means of Grace they ſhall live under; what Servants or Neighbours there are, by whoſe Converſation they may gain any Spiritual Advantage, or be furthered in the way to Heaven. If we will commune with our own hearts about theſe things, and deal plainly with our ſelves, we ſhall eaſily ſee what is the bent and inclination of our minds.

2. Obſerve how you ſtand affected in hearing the word; many may take delight therein, but there is no certain judgment to be made of perſons thereby. There are ſeveral Herbs or Plants in the ſame field, yea, ſeveral parts of the

the ſame plant or herb, which ſeveral Creatures of different kinds may delight in, or feed on; there are ſeveral Sermons, yea, ſeveral parts of the ſame Sermon, which divers perſons may be taken with. The Sheep perhaps feeds only on the tender leaf; the Horſe may perhaps eat the ſtalks with it; the Swine may feed on the root; the Bee on the flower; the Bird on the ſeed: ſo in hearing the word, ſome perſons may be pleaſed with flaſhes of wit, and flights of fancy; ſome with ſtrength of Reaſon, ſubtilty of Argument, depth of Judgment; ſome with Hiſtories or Antiquities, ſome with Satyr or Invectives againſt thoſe that they are at variance with: But o-
1 Pet. 2. 2. thers deſire rather *the ſincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby*; The plain truths of the Goſpel, which may further them in the way to Heaven; ſuch things as may beſt diſcover their ſpiritual ſtate to them, that they may not be deceived in a matter of ſo great moment; ſuch things as will awaken him out of his drowſineſs and ſecurity, as will direct him in the way wherein he
Rev. 3. 2. ſhould go; as will *ſtrengthen in him thoſe things which are remaining in him, and ready to die*; ſtrengthen our faith, quicken our affections to heavenly things, build us up on our moſt holy faith. Some that

have good appetites, may love to have their meat well dreſſed, and ſerved handſomely in, but they can eat good meat without ſawce, and prefer the meat to the ſawce, or a ſubſtantial diſh to newfangled diſhes, which are rather for ſhew and pleaſing the pallate, than for nouriſhment. Some may love to have their ſpiritual food brought to them, or conveyed to them in good and proper Language, who yet may more mind things than words, and the matter rather than the manner of delivery. God is pleaſed ſometimes ſo far to condeſcend to mens Temper and Genius, as to convey the ſaving-truths of the Goſpel to their hearts in ſuch words as are pleaſing and delightful to them; as Phyſicians convey their Medicines to the Stomach in ſome vehicle that may be grateful to it: So *Auſtin* was a great Orator, and one that taught Rhetorick; and *Ambroſe* being an eloquent Preacher, he was much delighted with his preaching, and it pleaſed God by thoſe words which he chiefly minded, to inſinuate into him thoſe things which before he minded not. He was very much pleaſed with *Tulli*'s Works, and (as *Pelitian* prefer'd *Pindar*'s Odes before *David*'s Pſalms, ſo he) preferred his Style to that of the Scripture, when he firſt began to read them:

them, but afterwards he blamed himself for it; and when he read his *Hortensius*, which before he had been pleased with above the rest of his Works, he disliked it, because he found not the Name of Christ there. Mr. *Robert Bolton* having heard the Fame of Mr. *Perkins*, going at a Commencement to *Cambridge*, went to hear him preach, and having heard him, he said, he was a passing mean Scholar, and a barren empty fellow: but when God changed his heart, he changed his opinion of Mr. *Perkins*, accounting him as learned and godly a Divine as this Church had for many years enjoyed, considering his age; for he was born and died in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*: It is said of him, That he taught *England* to preach; and a learned Prelate gives this Testimony of him, that he excelled in a distinct Judgment, and a rare dexterity in clearing the obscure subtilties of the School, and easy explication of the most perplexed Discourses. A sick person that desires Cure and Health, is not so much for a learned and ingenious Physician, that is good company, and one that will discourse aptly and pertinently on any Subject; but he is for a skilful and faithful Physician that understands his disease, and will apply proper Remedies

and such Physick as will rather work effectually, than please his Taste, or not make him sick. We value or chuse things according to the tendency which they have to the end which we aim at, or propound to our selves. So men *heap up to themselves teachers after their own lusts*, such as may please or gratify their corrupt inclinations. As if men be addicted to Debauchery or Drunkenness; he that *will prophesy of wine and strong drink, shall be the prophet of such a person*; he that will encourage him in his wickedness. So on the other hand, If a man seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness in the first place, or above all other things, he is for such an one, and for such preaching as will direct and help him in his way thither.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Mic. 2. 11.

3. Let us examine what it is that we chiefly desire of God in our Prayers; this will discover much of the bent and inclination of our hearts, and what it is that we chiefly mind. I speak not of the Prayers which we utter in the publick Congregation, or in our Families, or before others on any occasion: In these cases persons do not always utter their own desires, but many times at best such things as may express the desires of those with whom they pray, or the desires which they know in their

own Conſciences they and others ought to have: but many times men pray for oſtentation, or for a pretence, to ſhew their talent in expreſſing themſelves, or to ſeem more religious than they are: but thoſe Prayers whereby we may make a judgment of our ſelves, are the prayers which we pour out to God in ſecret, not by rote or by book, but from the bottom of our hearts, which we may know by dealing faithfully with our ſelves. Men indeed ask for ſuch things as they are convinc'd they ought to pray for, or as they have accuſtom'd themſelves to pray for, or which they have learned to pray for by hearing good Men pray, or out of good Books, it may be out of the Lord's Prayer: But theſe are not their real deſires, and they would not be willing to be taken at their word, to walk ſo ſtrictly as they pray that they may walk, to do the Will of God on Earth as it is done in Heaven; to have their ſins forgiven, only as they forgive others: But what are our real *requeſts which we make known to God*, which our hearts do ſincerely concur with; or what are theſe requeſts uttered by others with whom we join in prayer, that our hearts do cloſe with, and which we add our hearty Amen to; It is but a word of courſe with many

Phil. 4. 6.

and they deal with themselves as men deal many times with others, setting their hand to petitions which they never gave their consent to: but what are the petitions which we really own, and would gladly have answered? Are they for *Solomon*'s Leavings, Riches, long Life, the lives of our Enemies? Are they such as the Sons of *Zebedee* asked, Honours and Preferments? or rather such as *Solomon*'s petition was, for Wisdom, not to govern a Kingdom, but to get a Kingdom? *to make us wise to Salvation*, to rule our own spirits? that he would lift upon us the light of his Countenance; that our *hearts may be found in his Statutes?* do we turn *precepts* as well as promises into Prayers? desiring that God would direct or incline our hearts to what he requires us? Do we pray rather for the fruit, or a sanctified use of Affliction, than deliverance from it; that tho we cannot *walk in the light of God's Countenance*, yet we may walk by the light of his Word; that though we may not with *John*, *lie in Christ's bosom*, yet we may with *Mary*, *sit down at his feet to hear his word*, *fearing the Lord, and obeying the voice of his servants*, tho we *walk in darkness*, *and see no light*, have nothing of comfort.

Matth. 20. 21.
2 Tim. 3. 15.
Prov. 16. 32.
Psal 4. 7.
Psal. 119. 80.
Psal. 119. 4.5.
Heb. 12. 1'.
Psalm 89. 15.
Psalm 119. 10.
Jo. 13. 23.
Luc. 10. 39.
Is. 50. 10.

4. Let

4. Let us examine our selves by our company. Here the rule holds, *Noscitur ex socio*, &c. If we know not what a man is, we may give a near guess by his company; if a stranger come amongst us, we may conjecture at his temper, tho we never come near him, by the company that he chuses, and ordinarily associates himself with. It is true, it may be our unhappy lot to be cast among such whose society may be a burden to us, and we may be necessitated by our worldly occasions to keep company with prophane and wicked persons: But who are they in whose company we chiefly delight, or whom we chuse to make our familiar friends and companions? all *David's delight was in the Saints*, those he accounted the most excellent persons. *He was a companion of those that feared God, and invited such to turn to him*; they are such that the sincere Christian makes choice of as his bosome friends, not only as they are dear to God; *and so loving him that begat, he loves him that is begotten of him*, and would *shew kindness to such for his sake*, as *David* shewed *kindness* to Mephibosheth *for* Jonathan's *sake*. But like will to like. It is natural in brute Creatures; and persons are in their element when they are conversing with those

Psa. 120. 5.

1 Cor. 5. 10.

Psal. 16. 3.

Psal. 119. 63, 79.

1 Jo. 5. 1.

2 Sam. 9. 1. 7.

like themſelves. we may obſerve ordi-
dinarily, at any publick meetings where
there are ſeveral ſorts of perſons, who
they are that get together, and how
they ſort or divide themſelves. If there
be Scholars or Learned Men, they will
be together; Husbandmen will aſſoci-
ciate together; ſo Merchants or other
Trades-men: not only as they can beſt
bear a part in ſuch diſcourſe as perſons
of their own way have together, and
are not, as the Apoſtle ſaith in another
caſe, *Barbarians* to each other; but they
reliſh ſuch diſcourſe as is of things in
their own element, as we ſpeak: and
which is more, they may get a further
inſight into their own Calling or Buſi-
neſs, by the experience of others which
they communicate to them; ſo it is
with Chriſtians, when they meet with
thoſe that ſpeak of things pertaining to
the Kingdom of God; It is like one
fallen into the company of thoſe that
ſpeak their own Language, or Diſcourſe
of matters belonging to their own cal-
ling; we may gain experience by con-
verſing with ſuch. As the Apoſtle *longed*
to be at Rome, that he might not only im- Rom. 1.
part ſome ſpiritual gift to them, but that 11, 12.
he might be comforted together with them,
by their mutual faith. Chriſtians may be
helpful to others that are far above them

in

in gifts and knowledge; as *Junius* saith of himself in his own Life, tho he was a means of increasing the knowledge of an honest Countryman that he accidentally met with, yet the Countryman was a means of inflaming his Zeal, he speaking with such feeling and such a savoury relish of the matters of Religion, as made him think there was something yet further in Christianity than he had attained to; so that Christians sharpen each other by their mutual converse, *as Iron sharpens Iron.* *David* would tell others *what God had done for his Soul;* *and the humble*, (those that were brought low by affliction, and not too proud to learn) *should hear thereof, and be glad*, that there had been others in like condition with themselves, and yet had found mercy and help; yea, they should say, *This poor man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his trouble.* They should not consider him as a King, as a Prophet, as a man after God's own heart, for the eminency of Grace; but as a poor man seeking shelter among strangers, and (which is worse) using such poor mean shifts as he did; debasing himself so far below that Courage and Faith which he had at other times: for this Psalm was composed upon *his changing his behaviour before* Abimelech,

Prov. 2.7. 27.
Psalm 66. 16.
Psal. 34.2.
V. 6.
1 Sam. 21. 11, &c.

when he drove him away, and he departed; the ſtory of which we have 1 Sam. 21. 11, &c. on ſuch grounds a godly man will chuſe ſuch for his neceſſaries, his near or familiar friends.

These are the few things amongſt many, about which I would have Chriſtians to examine themſelves, that they may be the better able to make a judgment concerning their Spiritual State, and to take the comfort of their Chriſtian Privileges, eſpecially in times of trouble, and when we approach towards our latter end.

CHAP. VIII.

FAith is yet a great help againſt Trouble, as we thereby have the comfort and benefit of the Promiſes of God, which are ſo *exceeding great and pretious.* 2 Pet. 1. 4.

1. It is a great thing for God to oblige himſelf to us by promiſe, as *Auſtin* ſaith, Confeſ. *L.* 5. *c.* 9. *Thou are pleaſed, becauſe thy Mercy endures for ever, to become a Debtor by thy promiſes, to thoſe to whom thou haſt forgiven all their Debts.* We love to be free and diſengaged, and would have others ſtand to our courteſy for that which we intend to give them: but

we would not give them that advantage against us to challenge us upon our word. But it hath pleased God for our more abundant consolation, so far to condescend to poor sinners, that we may, as *Austin* saith (in the place before cited) of his Mother, urge upon him his own hand-writing, or plead
Psal. 119. 49. as *David*, *Remember thy word to thy Servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope.*
1 Jo. 5. 10. For we make him a lyar if we do not trust his promise.

2. The promises of God are exceeding great and precious in respect of the *matter* of them: he having promised so many and so great things which we should not have had the confidence to ask or think, if he had not encouraged us by such promises. And as there are in Physick some *Catholick* remedies, and some particular Medicines for particular Diseases; so there are some *general* comprehensive promises, as that great promise in which all the promises of the life that now is, and that which is to come are summed up, That God will be our God, or that he will be a God to
1 Chr. 17. 24. us. So that promise which occurs so
Heb. 8. 10. oft in Scripture, that God will be with us: which is not to be with us as
Jer 23. 24. he is *in all places*, or so as to be an unconcerned spectator of what befalls us

but so as to deal well with us, as *Jacob* expounds it, as we shall see by comparing *Gen.* 31. 3. with *Gen.* 32. 9. So there are some promises wherein several things are put together as many ingredients into one Cordial: such is that promise, *that God will be a Sun and Shield, that he will give grace and glory, and will withhold no good thing from such as walk uprightly.* This promise comprehends all the good things of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. And I know not but the Apostle may have particular respect to this promise, there being a promise of things Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal; of Comfort, Direction, Protection, Provision. But there are *particular* promises suited to the several conditions of Christians, which are by some reduced to several heads, and by others summed together in the order wherein they stand in Scripture. So that whatever circumstances we are in, we may find promises suited thereto. And as they are exceeding great and precious in respect of the *fulness*, and great *variety* of them; so they are precious in respect of the *truth and certainty* of them. This is it that makes other promises from men of so little value, that every man is a lyar. *David* indeed spake that rashly, and it may be therein might have respect to the pro-

Ps. 84. 11.

1 Tim. 4. 8

Psal. 116. 11.

miſes which were made to him from God by *Samuel* or *Nathan*, as under temptation he ſaid he ſhould *one day*
1. Sam. 27. 1. *periſh by the hand of Saul*, and then the promiſe would have failed. But he did more deliberately ſay, *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye*; deceiving others either through weak-
Pſal. 62. 9. neſs or wickedneſs; either not being able to make good what they have unadviſedly promiſed, or willingly flattering them into vain expectations of what they never intended to do for them. But theſe are *promiſes of God*
Tit. 1. 2. *that cannot lye*. As he is *faithful that hath*
Heb. 11. 11. *promiſed*, ſo he is able alſo to perform; and tho we are ready to ſay ſometimes,
Rom. 4. 2. *doth his promiſe fail for evermore?* We
Pſal. 77. 8. do either through ignorance miſtake the meaning of them, as the *Jews* of Old, and many ſtill are ready to expound many promiſes too rigidly according to the letter: or we are ready to underſtand thoſe things abſolutely, which are to be underſtood with that limita-
Pſal. 34. 10 84. 11. tion ſo far as they are for our good, which we are not always competent
Eccleſ. 6. 12. judges of; or we are too quick and impatient of delays: the viſion is for
Hab. 2. 4. an appointed time; and the things which *God hath promiſed ſhall be fulfilled*
Luk. 1. 20. *in their ſeaſon*.

I will

I will now shew you how by Faith we have the comfort and benefit of these promises.

1. By Faith we have an interest in the promises. We read of the *covenants of promise*, whereby we may either understand the promises of the Covenant, there being the like *Hypallage* oft found in Scripture; as by the *Law of righteousness*, is meant *the righteousness of the Law*. *And the Nations of those that shall be saved*, are *those that shall be saved of the Nations*. And it may be called the Covenants, because tho it be one in the substance of it, yet it is diverse in respect of its administration; on which account it is called both Old and New. Or it is called the Covenants of promise, as being founded on, and consisting in promises. In Scripture we find promises frequently called Covenants, Covenants consisting of mutual promises or engagements: and where the promise on one side only is expressed, the engagement on the other side is ordinarily implied. Now there is no *case* wherein the words *Promise* and *Covenant* may with more reason be used promiscuously than in this case in hand, and so they are used by the Apostle; for tho this Covenant be not an absolute promise, there being some-

Eph. 2. 12.

Rom. 9. 31.

Rev. 21. 24.

Heb. 8. 13.

Gen 6. 18. 2 Chron. 7. 18. Ezr. 10. 3. Neh 9. 38.

Gal. 3. 17. 22.

thing to be done by the Mediator of it for the confirmation thereof, as likewiſe by us for partaking of the benefit of it: yet it is *ordered in all things and ſure*; and not ſuſpended on any uncertain condition, depending on our fluctuating will; but what is required on our part is likewiſe promiſed to be wrought in us. So that as there are promiſes *to conditions*, which I may ſpeak without the offence of thoſe that underſtand what is ordinarily or properly meant by a condition: ſo there are promiſes *of thoſe conditions*. Now this promiſe or Covenant *by faith of Jeſus Chriſt, is given to them that believe*; Faith intitling us to the grand promiſe, whereof all the reſt are branches: all theſe being *yea and amen, faithful and true in Jeſus Chriſt*; who as Mediator of the Covenant, died for the confirmation of it. For the further clearing of this matter, we muſt know, that many of the promiſes in Scripture were made to particular perſons, and on ſome ſpecial occaſion: yet we muſt not look upon ſuch things as the caſes of thoſe perſons only (as ſome call them) that do not concern others: for what is put into the Canon of Scripture, is there left on Record for our Inſtruction and Comfort. So that we ſhall find the

2 Sam. 23. 5.
Jer. 31. 33.
John 6. 37.
Eph. 2. 8.
Gal. 3. 22.
2 Cor. 1. 20.
Dan. 9. 27.
Rom. 15.

as lived many Hundred years after, as if they had been directed particularly to them. So the Prophet saith, that God spake with *Israel* in that which he spake to *Jacob* in *Bethel*, so many Hundred year before. And that which was spoken to *Moses* is said to be *spoken* to the *Jews* in Christ's time; and what was spoken in *Solomon's* time is applied to the *Hebrews* in the Apostles time. And so the promise that was made to *Joshua* upon a particular occasion, is applied so the *Hebrews*, tho in another case; God being always the same, and bearing the same love to his People, and so is with them, as I said before, to deal well with them, and to do for them as the matter requires. And tho we cannot expect, that God should deal with us in every respect according to his promise made to others, yet we may take encouragement from thence to hope, that he will deal proportionably with us. Ministers of the Gospel cannot expect that God should enable them to work Miracles, because of what he promised to the Apostles when he sent them forth; or that he should secure them from the assaults of wicked men, because of what he promised to *Paul* at *Corinth*. But we may thence conclude, that his grace shall be sufficient for us; that we shall have help and assistance from him

Hos. 12. 4.

Exod. 3. 6. Matt. 22. 31.

Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 5.

Jos. 1. 5.

Mark. 16. 17.

Acts 18. 10.

according to the work which he calls us to, and that where he hath any perſons to ſave, he will find ways and means for the effecting of it, and that he will work ſo as none ſhall let. Again, there are promiſes made to perſons under ſome particular circumſtances, as to the Fatherleſs and Widows, to the Poor and Needy, to the Sick, to thoſe that ſuffer for Righteouſneſs ſake; and we may not be concerned in promiſes made to ſuch. Now it is in this caſe, as in thoſe commands that are given to ſeveral relations. Tho ſuch commands concern us not at preſent, as they cannot all reach to all; yet as any come into ſuch relations, they come under the obligation of ſuch commands. So as any come into ſuch circumſtances, they come under the influence of ſuch promiſes as are made to perſons in them. We read, it may be, Books of Phyſick, or Surgery, and there meet with receipts or remedies which we have no need of: let us make uſe of thoſe which we have need of, and thank God that we are free from ſo many Diſeaſes, as we perceive by ſuch Books poor mortals are ſubjects to: and that there are ſuch remedies in readineſs, in caſe we ſhould need them. So when we read ſuch variety of pro-

Acts 26. 22.

Iſa. 43. 13.

Eph. 5. 22, &c.

miſes in Scripture, let us bleſs God that we are exempted from ſo many troubles as are there provided againſt; that there are ſuch promiſes laid in for ſuch as do want them, and that they are there in readineſs for us, if we ſhould be reduced to ſuch a condition. Some promiſes are made to perſons under ſome particular *character or qualification*, as to the meek, the humble, to thoſe that fear God, or love him; to thoſe that truſt in him, to the upright in heart, or of an upright converſation. But all theſe are ſeveral Characters of the ſame perſons: grace being as leven that levens the whole lump; tho ſome grace may appear more eminently in one than in another, and ſome more eminently than another in the ſame perſon, as they meet or fall in with their natural temper or inclination. For when theſe meet, they are as Wind and Tide meeting together; or they are deſcribed by thoſe graces which conſidering their circumſtances or temptations they have moſt occaſion for the exerciſe of: and therefore they may appear moſt eminently in them: and ſo ſuch promiſes may be made to ſuch perſons as are moſt ſuitable to them, or proper for them in the circumſtances wherin at preſent they are; and as I ſaid in the former caſe, are

1 Theſ. 5. 23.

in readineſs for us when our condition requires them. How we have the comfort of the Promiſes by Faith, we may ſee partly by what I have already ſaid: and it is implied in that word whereby it is expreſſed in Scripture, relying or reſting on God, the Soul is then at eaſe. But as I there ſhewed you, it is not the habit of Faith, but the actual exerciſe of it, that expels fear and trouble, as light doth darkneſs. But it will appear further by what I have yet to add; and that is, that by Faith we do as the Apoſtle ſaith, *obtain the promiſes*; that is, the things promiſed; *faith gives glory to God*, in ſealing to his truth or veracity; therefore God honours Faith in dealing with men according thereto. And in many other places, *we ſee faith ſaved them* from temporal Evils. The ſame we find in the caſe of *Aſa*; ſo God was intreated of the *Rubenites* and *Gadites*, when they cried to him becauſe they truſted in him; ſo he ſaved *Ebedmelech* from the men that he was afraid of, *becauſe he truſted in him*, according to that remarkable promiſe made to the righteous, that *the Lord ſhall help them and deliver them; deliver them from the wicked, and ſave them, becauſe they truſt in him*; whereas on the contrary, the noble man that would not

2 Chron. 13. 18. 16. 7.
Pſ. 37. 7.
Heb. 11. 33.
Rom. 4. 20.
Jo. 3. 33.
Matt. 9. 2. 22. 29.
2 Chron. 6, 7, 8, 9.
1 Chron. 5. 20.
Jer. 39. 17, 18.
Pſ. 37. 40.

believe the plenty that ſhould be in *Samaria*, did not eat of it. Many of the *Iſraelites* entred not into the promiſed Land, *becauſe of their unbelief*. *Zechariah*, a good man, was dumb for a time, *becauſe he believed not the words of God which were to be fulfilled in their ſeaſon*. There is a ſeaſon for many things to be fulfilled which we muſt wait for: *unbelief makes God a lyar*; therefore he will ſhew his diſpleaſure againſt it. But it is ſo likewiſe in Spiritual bleſſings; we read of great things aſcribed to Faith; as purifying the heart; *overcoming the World*, quenching all the fiery darts of the wicked. Now it doth not all theſe things in a moral way, as *Moſes* overcame by looking to *the recompence of the reward*: but we are thereby *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; or *in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus*: and we *are kept by the power of God through Faith to Salvation*. It is the Divine Power that keeps us, and we are *ſtrengthned* thereby, or *according* thereto; and not only morally by his word, as men may ſtrengthen each other; but it is Faith that takes in this aid or aſſiſtance of Grace, or the *ſupplies of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt*; which are communicated from him to the ſeveral Members of his Myſtical Body, as the Spirits are

2 Kings 7. 19, 20. Heb. 3. 19. Luke 1. 20. 1 Jo. 5. 10. Acts 15. 9. 1 Jo. 5. 4. Eph. 6. 17. Heb. 11. 26. Epheſ. 6. 10. 2 Tim 2. 1. 1 Peter 1. 5. Col. 1. 11. Job 42. 4. Ezek. 13. 22. Phil 1. 9.

from

from the Head in the Natural Body; and as *Christ dwells in the heart by faith*, so we derive Spiritual Life and Virtue from him, in the daily Exercise of Faith; he leaving those usually to themselves that trust to their own strength; as Youth and Young men are ready to do; when those that wait on the Lord, and look to him for supplies of Grace, shall surmount all difficulties, and persevere in well-doing without *weariness* or *fainting*. *He will strengthen the heart of those that wait on him*, and give Grace to such humble Souls, as distrusting themselves, rely upon him for strength and assistance.

Ephes. 3. 17.

Naiah 40. 30, 31.

Psalm 27. 14.

CHAP. IX.

THere is yet one way more whereby Faith becomes such an effectual Remedy against Touble, and that is, as we thereby have a view or prospect of the other World, or of the Future state. *We thereby look to the things that are not seen, which are eternal.* And if any shall say, the word there used, doth not imply that he saw them, or had a view of them, but only that he made them his scope or aim: I answer, The word sometimes signifies to mark or

2 Cor. 4. 18.

obſerve, as well as to conſider or have reſpect to. And we do in a ſort ſee the things which we aim at: *Moſes* is ſaid to *endure*, *as ſeeing him that is viſible*; which implies not the manner of his enduring, but the ground of it; not as if he had ſeen him that is inviſible, but becauſe he ſaw him that is inviſible, or like one that ſaw the inviſible God. So *as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, is a glory becoming ſuch an one.* And if it be ſaid, there is a Contradiction in the terms, to ſee him that is Inviſible: I anſwer, It is an Elegancy uſed frequently in Scriptures, where a word in the ſame place is taken in different ſenſes, *as to believe in hope, againſt hope. And ſhe that liveth in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe lives.* She lives Naturally, but is dead Spiritually. So God is inviſible to our bodily Eyes, but we *ſee him by faith, which is the evidence of things not ſeen.* And if it be further objected, that Faith and Sight are oppoſed in Scripture; as, *We walk by faith, and not by ſight. And in whom, tho now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* For this latter place, diſtinguiſh of ſeeing as before, and the ſenſe is plain; and for the former place, Faith is there oppoſed, either to the Viſion of God which

Rom. 16. 17. Phil. 3. 17. Heb. 11. 27. John 1. 14. Rom. 4. 18. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Heb. 11. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

we ſhall have in the Future ſtate, or to preſent ſenſe; implying that we ſhould govern our lives not by Senſe, or what we ſee, but by what we believe, or hereafter hope for. And the Apoſtle when he would ſet forth the virtue of Faith, and of what excellent uſe it is to ſupport Chriſtians under Trials and Sufferings; he grounds it upon this, that it is *the ſubſtance of*
Heb. 11. 1. *things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen.* It gives as it were a real and preſent ſubſiſtence to things that are yet but future, and ſo hoped for; and giveth us as full ſatisfaction concerning thoſe things which we do not ſee, as if we ſaw them clearly before our eyes. And theſe two things make that which is future to affect us more, and work more effectually upon us. We ſay indeed among men, that ſeeing is believing. And they have Proverbial Speeches in other Nations, like this of our own; There is ſo much deceit and falſhood to be found among men, that perſons will hardly believe till they ſee, or have ſufficient ground for it; and ſo will not venture much on uncertain hopes. But when we have to do with God that cannot lie, believing is ſeeing; that is, when we have his Word to ground our Faith upon, we

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are as ſure as if we ſaw with our eyes, or as if things were proved to us by a Mathematical Demonſtration; that is, by ſuch clear evidence as nothing can be objected againſt. But tho we look upon things as certain, they do not much affect us, if we look upon them as at a great diſtance: therefore wicked men relieve themſelves againſt the fear of future Evils, by looking upon them as at a great diſtance; *or putting far away the evil day.* We are likewiſe encouraged to patience by the near approach of the recompence of reward; *becauſe he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry: The coming of the Lord draws nigh: The judge ſtands before the door.* And our Saviour bids his Diſciples *lift up their heads when their redemption draws nigh.* If perſons were going to ſome places, and tired with the tediouſneſs of their Journey, and diſcouraged with the Difficulties and Dangers that they meet with in their way, queſtioning whether they ſhould find the way to it, or hold out till they come at it; ſhould come to the top of an Hill, and before they are aware, ſee the place that they are going to, a little before them, what Courage and Life would it preſently put into them? As *Columbus* that firſt diſcovered the *Weſt Indies*,

Ezek. 12. 27. Amos 6. 3. Heb. 10. 37. James 5. 8, 9. Luke 21. 28.

Indies, when his men were ready to Mutiny, having been wearied with a Voyage of Sixty days over the Ocean, he perceiving the Clouds to look clearer, concluded that they were not far from Land; and so promised them to return, if they did not within three days discover Land, which they did before the end of the third day. So if we could get a sight of the other World, as *Moses* did of the Land of *Cannan, on the top of Pisgah*; What Vigour and Life would it add to us, when we are ready to faint and be discouraged? Now Faith (according to the Description given of it) serves us as a Telescope or Perspective Glass, discovering to us the things which we see not, and making things seem near which are afar off. We thereby have as full certainty of the things of the other World, as if they *were evidently set forth before your eyes*, to use the Apostles words. Yea, the things of eternity are hereby brought near to us, and seem to us as at hand, and thereby our Affections are much abated to the things of this World: The time being short, and the fashion of this World passing away, we may rejoice in the good things of it, as if we rejoiced not, and mourn for the evil things of it, as if we wept not; moderate both our

Deut. 3. 27.

Gal. 3. 1.

joy and Sorrow, the end of all things being at hand, and we being even ready to enter upon the borders of Eternity. 1 Cor. 7. 29, &c.

And that we may the better understand how Faith brings things nearer to us, or makes them seem at a less distance; let us consider, that God being Eternal, and seeing all things at one single view, one day is with him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; and tho we are indeed finite Creatures, and measure Time by Succession; yet taking a view of Eternity, and looking to the things that are Eternal, the things of this World are nothing compared therewith, and the time of this Life but as a moment in comparison with the days of Eternity. We may observe, That Old men that have lived long in the World, make nothing of Seven years, yea, reckon Twenty years but a short time; when Younger persons look upon it as a long time. Those that are of narrow minds, and consider no more than what they have seen, and have never gone far from home, look upon Twenty or Thirty miles as a long way. But those that have travelled to the *Indies*, or Thousands of miles from home, reckon Twenty or Thirty Miles as nothing;

yea,

yet those that have by the Study of Geography, or looking on Globes or Maps, observed the vast Compass of the World, would account so many Miles as a very small matter; and a great Traveller would think himself as good as at home, if he were within so many Miles of it. So tho we were never taken up as *Paul* into the Third Heaven, yet the Description which we have of it in the Scriptures, may sink the things of this World quite below our Consideration. Those that write Descriptions of other Countries, give us an Account ordinarily of the Scituation of the Place, the Compass or Extent of it, the Nature of the Soil, the Commodities that it affords, the Healthfulness of the Air, the Genius or Temper of the People. But the Countries so described, are sometimes found to be but imaginary *Utopia's*, or meer Fancies: And others when we come to see them, fall far short of the Description which we had of them, and deceive our Expectations. But as we have by Faith a full Assurance of future Glory, the Scripture being *no cunningly devised fable*; so we are assured it will not deceive our Hopes, or fall short of the Account which we have of it in the Scrpitures. As *Luther* would say,

2 Pet. 1. 16.

Christ and Heaven are not capable of an Hyperbole. For tho it is true, that may be said of them which is false; yet their true and real Worth will exceed whatever the Tongue of Men and Angels can speak of them. The report which the Queen of Sheba heard of the Glory and Wisdom of Solomon in her own Country, exceeded her belief; but what she found when she came to see, far exceeded the Report. *The one half of it had not been told her.* So glorious things are spoken of the City of God, Christ tells his Disciples, There were many Mansions in his Fathers house, room to receive not only the innumerable Company of Angels, but the General Assembly of that *great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.* There is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. And it is not as some places, where there is plenty of all things, but the Air is bad, so as the Inhabitants are but short-liv'd; *but there the inhabitants shall not say they are sick: There will be no death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain.*

I will not take upon me to set forth particularly the greatness of this Glory; *It being that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man.* And that which God hath prepared

1 Kings 10. 7, &c.

Rev. 7. 9. Psalm 16. 11.

Isaiah 33. 24. Rev. 21. 4.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

pared, *that he might therein shew the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.* We must Rom. 9: 23. not consider things *absolutely*, but *comparatively*, and this will much alter our Account of them. Let us observe the Account which the Apostle gives of his own Sufferings, and his Fellow-Christians; they were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that they despaired even of Life; and for his own part, *bonds and afflictions did abide him* Acts 20. 23. wherever he went; and we have a particular Account of his Sufferings, 2 Cor. 11. 23, &c. But when he comes to speak of these things comparatively, see how he changes his stile in one of the highest strains of Rhetorick that is to be found in Scripture, or any other Author. These afflictions which in themselves were so grievous, and did often return upon them, as the clouds return after the rain, were but light, and *for a moment, compared with that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, which 1 Cor. 4. 17. they wrought for them; observe how he raises his strain, he begins high, yet how many notes doth he rise? Glory, a weight of glory, an exceeding weight of glory, a more exceeding weight of glory, a far more exceeding weight of glory; yea, once more, a far more ex-

ceeding and eternal weight of glory; and tho the word *Hyperbole* be twice used in the *Greek*, there is no *Hyperbole* or Excess in the Apostle's Speech; he doth use the word again and again, to make an attempt at expressing the greatness of glory, as if it were accumulated or heaped up, yet he cannot thereby reach the thing it self which he would express: and tho there seems to be a *Majosis* or diminution in the former part of the verse, as if he did not justly rate the sufferings of this life, he speaks only of what they are comparatively, as the *Israelites* were but *Grashoppers compared with the Giants*; we should learn from such language in Scriptures to habituate our selves to lower and meaner thoughts of the things of this world, and higher thoughts of those things of the world to come. *The Angels complain of the time wherein God had indignation against* Jerusalem, *it was threescore and ten years*, but when it is compared with the everlasting kindness wherewith he hath mercy on his people, it is but *a little wrath, and for a moment*. Children look but a little way before them, and it seems hard to them to be kept to their books, and to School-discipline, or to hard l[illegible] our under a severe master; and they c[illegible]sider only the present ease and pleasure

Num. 13. 33.

Zech. 1. 12.

Isaiah 54. 8.

pleasure of others that are left to themselves. But their wiser parents look further, and consider how short a time they are at School, or at an Apprentiship, in comparison with the rest of their lives; what Preferments, what Riches many attain to by a good improvement of that time: and on the contrary, what Straits, what Miseries many are reduced to, that trifle away their younger years. But there is a far greater disproportion betwixt the things of this life, and that which is to come, and as great a difference betwixt their duration and continuance.

Now by Faith we take a view of the things that are not seen, which are eternal, and are as sure of them, as if we saw them; as if we were with *Paul caught up into Paradise*, to see the glory of Heaven, or as if we had some place opened to us to look into the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone for evermore, as the Prophet had a place opened *through the wall* to see the Abominations that were done by the house of *Israel*: Now while we do by Faith look to these things, and while we see the time of this life but *as an handbreadth to Eternity*; we shall *reckon the sufferings of this present life, not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in*

2 Cor. 12. 4.

Ezek. 8. 7, &c.

Psalm 39. 5.

Rom. 8. 18.

w, nor any way answerable to those miseries which poor sinners must be *tormented with night and day for ever and ever*. Therefore as in one spiritual combat we should take to our selves Faith *as a shield, to hold up against the fiery darts of the wicked*; so we should take it to us as a Perspective-glass, through the help of which we shall not only see afar off, beyond time to Eternity; but it will bring the things of the world to come nearer to us, and make them seem as at hand; for tho they be not really nearer, yet that distance of time which they are at from us, will seem as nothing, when we compare it with that Eternity which is beyond time, wherein we must be for ever happy or miserable, according to what we propound to our selves as our chief end.

Rev. 20. 10.

Ephes. 6. 16.

And let us but consider what is the principle that all the world is acted by, what is the spring that moves the several wheels that are moving some one way and some another; or what is it that (as it is said concerning *Noah*) doth comfort men concerning their work, and toil of their hands; but the hopes of future Advantages, Honour, Riches: for these the Soldier exposes himself to a thousand hardships and hazards: The Merchant leaves his Friends and Coun-

try,

try, and commits himself to the waves, runs the risque of suffering Shipwrack, being taken by Pyrates, and subjected to perpetual Slavery: And if we do run the like hazards for the profession of Religion, which men seldom do, let us by this Perspective look before us, not only to the recompence of Reward which will abundantly answer all our losses and sufferings, but to the penalty that we shall incur if we do not by patient continuance in well-doing wait for Honour and Glory and Immortality, there being no middle place between Heaven and Hell.

And let us but consider the difference betwixt our case and the case of those that endure such hardships, and run such hazards for the things of this world. The Apostle sets it forth in two things, borrowing a similitude from things then in use amongst them; *one did strive for a corruptible crown*, a Garland of Flowers or Lawrel: the other for *a crown of Glory that fades not away*. The one did run uncertainly, the other with more assurance of success: So here there is no comparison betwixt what we shall receive through Faith and Patience, and what men receive as the reward of their labours and sufferings here in this world; either for the ne-

1 Cor. 9. 25, 26.

1 Pet. 5. 4.

ture, or for the continuance of it; and we are at greater certainties about it. Here *the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill; but time and chance happens to all.* But if we be *stedfast, unmoveable, abounding always in the Lord's work, we may know that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* Eccl. 9. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

I should here conclude; but that as the Apostle would *provoke* the *Jews* to *emulation* by the Gentiles, so I would by a *Heathen*, provoke Christians to look by Faith to the things, which are not seen, which are eternal. *Seneca* in the beginning of his Preface to his Natural Questions, shews, 'That as there is a 'difference betwixt Philosophy and o'ther Arts, so there is a difference be'twixt that part of Philosophy which 'respects men, and that which respects 'God. This latter (*he saith*) is more high 'and sprightly, and supposes something 'greater and more beautiful, which Na'ture hath placed out of sight; and 'unless he might be admitted to these 'things, he should not think it worth 'the while to be born, or to take such 'pains; and adds, O how contemptible 'a thing is man, if he do not raise up 'himself above human things! If an Rom. 11. 14.

Heathen could speak thus, what a shame is it for us that have the help of Divine Revelation, to fall under the reproach and censure of those that mind earthly things?

It is by faith alone that we can look to those things out of sight; let us thereby raise up our selves to take a view of the other World, both the good and evil things of it; and this will so raise and enlarge our minds, that we shall have meaner thoughts of the things of this life, and not concern our selves so fain in the pursuit of the good things of the world, or in the avoiding the evil things of it, as thereby to be taken off from minding those things that are above; or so as to run the hazard of falling short of that rest, which we have a promise left us of entring into.

CHAP. XII.

HAving treated thus far of the *nature* of Faith, and the *benefit* and advantage that Christians have thereby: I shall now add something for *encouraging persons to believe*, and for *directing* them therein. And whereas some speak of the Souls preparation for Christ, I will endeavour to shew you briefly and

plainly what is required in order to believing. And first, *there* is nothing to be done in order to our believing, which may *commend us to Christ for his acceptance.* It is said, *a mans gift makes room for him, and brings him before great Men*; *by means* thereof, he hath free access to great Men, and finds favour with them. But we can bring neither *price* nor *present* to Christ, nor come to him as a *Bride adorned with Jewels*, that we may be in his eyes as one that finds favour: we must rather come to Christ that we *may buy of him Gold tried in the fire*, that we may be rich, and *white raiment to cover our nakedness*, and *eye-salve to anoint our eyes*; and we must buy this *without money, and without price.* It is (as they speak) the antecedent put for the consequent; as God is said to *sell* his people, when he delivers them into the hands of their Enemies, tho he sell them *for nought*; because in selling, there is a delivering of what is sold, into the hands of the Buyer. So we are said to *buy*, when we make a thing our own, or get it into our own hands. Tho the Prophet speaks chiefly of the mean Condition of the *Jews*, when God took them to be his peculiar people, and advanced them to such greatness; yet that was a Representation of the State

Prov. 18. 16.
Isaiah 61. 10.
Cant. 8. 10.
Rev. 3. 18.
Isaiah 55. 1.
Judg. 2. 14.
Psalm 44. 12
Ezek. 16.

and Condition wherein God finds Sinners, when he chuſes them out of the World, and ſets them apart for himſelf.

Iſaiah 64. 6. *Our righteouſneſs is but as filthy rags.* Theſe do not reach to cover a man's Nakedneſs, but it is ſeen through them; and if they be filthy rags, they rather make a perſon more loathſome, than become an Ornament to him, ſo far as they do reach. So our beſt Works, or Duties, reach but a little way; they extend but to a ſmall part of our lives; and ſo far as they do reach, they are polluted and defiled with ſin. We muſt not come with our own righteouſneſs to Chriſt, *but we muſt be married to Chriſt, that we may bring forth fruit to* Rom. 7. 4. *God.* And if any ſay, we are *married to Chriſt by faith*, and ſo muſt receive that Grace whereby we believe, before we are married to him. I anſwer, It is in this caſe, as it happens in ſome Marriages. If a mean perſon marry one that is much above her, tho ſhe be entitled by Marriage to what is her Husband's, if ſhe hath not wherewithal to bear the Charge of the Marriage, or to come to him, as *Rebecca* did to *Iſaac*, ſhe muſt take on truſt what will defray this Charge, on the Credit ſhe hath by ſuch a deſigned Marriage, or be furniſhed with what is neceſſary from him. So, tho

tho we are entitled to the benefits of Christ, by our believing on him; yet *it is given to us to believe on him for his sake*; through whom we receive the first Grace, as well as all the rest. Phil. 1. 29.

2. There is nothing required in us to make the Grace of God to become effectual. He doth not as those that make choice of such as nature hath qualified or fitted for improvement to great employments; or take the advantage of any good humour which he finds men in, that may dispose them to Eternal Life, as some interpret the words of the Evangelist, which in our Translation, *were ordained to eternal life*. *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he would take some of the Children of the Captivity to train up for his Service, chose such as were well-favoured, or sightly; *and such as were skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability*. But God doth not seek out such for his Service; He makes *the heart of the rash to understand knowledg, and the tongue of the stammerers to speak plainly*. The Carpenter indeed must look out such Wood as is naturally fitted for his use; he cannot make a crooked piece straight by bending, or make a knotty piece cleave. But a Founder can take any piece of Metal of Acts 13. 48. Daniel 1. 4. Isaiah 32. 4.

what ſize or form ſoever, or however ruſty, or batter'd, and caſt it into what Mold or Form he pleaſes. So *God can of ſtones raiſe up children to Abraham.* And as he ſhews the freeneſs and riches of his Mercy in chuſing the worſt of Sinners; ſo he ſhews the power of his Grace, in making a thorough change in thoſe in whom he finds the moſt deep-rooted Prejudices againſt the Goſpel. He turned *Paul* when he was in his full Carreer towards Hell; while *he was breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Church*; and verily thought he ought to do many things againſt *the name of Jeſus of Nazareth*; *ſo that they glorified God in him*, when they ſaw ſuch a wonderful change wrought in him.

Matth. 3. 9.

Acts 9. 1. and 26. 9. Gal. 1. 23, 24.

But tho there be nothing in us which may oblige God to beſtow his Grace on us, or facilitate his Work in our Converſion, or drawing us to Chriſt; yet as Faith is our Act, there is ſomething required in order thereto, *that we may believe with all our heart*, or freely and willingly take hold on God's Covenant. *The full ſtomach loathes the hony comb, and ſwine will tread pearls under their feet.* Therefore only thoſe *that are weary and heavy laden*, and thoſe *that thirſt, are invited to come to Chriſt*, becauſe none but ſuch will come. *John* asks *the*

Acts 8. 37.

Prov. 27. 7. Matth. 7. 6.

Matth. 11. 28. Revel. 22. 17.

Pharisees and *Sadducees*, *Who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come*; whereby he doth not, I suppose, mean *the wrath that was to come upon that nation by the Romans*: but *the damnation of Hell*, as our Saviour elsewhere calls it: It is *the wrath to come, which Jesus delivereth us from*: The *Sadducees* did not believe that there was any Future state, and consequently *any wrath to come*: The *Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous*, and so could not apprehend any danger of the wrath to come. Therefore he seems to question their sincerity in the profession which they made, and requires them to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, and not to ground their hopes upon their Descent from *Abraham*. As men are to *give a reason of the hope that is in them*, so they should have some reason for their *believing*, or coming to God by Jesus Christ.

Matth. 3. 7. Luke 21. 23. Matth. 23. 33. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Acts 23. 8. Luke 18. 9, 10. 1 Peter 3. 15.

I shall take the liberty here to refer to what hath been said by a Grave Sober man on this Subject, he being a person that none will suspect of going too far on this hand. In the Instructions that he gives to prevent the defects that we are most liable to in the first Act of Faith, he tells us, 1. We must believe with a full persuasion, that we are

Mr. Walter Marshal *in the Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*, p. 207, &c.

Children of Wrath by Nature, subject to the Curse of the Law, the Power of Satan, and insupportable misery to all Eternity. 2. We must believe assuredly, that there is no way to be saved, without receiving all the saving benefit of Christ; his Spirit as well as his Merits, Sanctification as well as Remission of Sins by Faith: It being (as he saith) the ruin of many souls, that they trust on Christ for the remission of Sins, without any regard to Holiness, whenas these two benefits are inseparably joined in Christ [He herein grants more than many will desire of him, that men should assuredly believe this in the first Act of Faith]. 3. We must be fully perswaded of the all-sufficiency of Christ for the Salvation of our selves, and all that believe on him. 4. We are to be fully perswaded of the truth of the general Free-promise in our own particular case. 5. We are to believe assuredly that it is the Will of God that we should believe in Christ, and have Eternal Life by him, as well as any other. Now, without the two former of these, we shall not mind coming to Christ, but shall make light of him; without the others, we shall have little encouragement to come to him.

Now if any shall enquire whether these things which are perpatory to our believing or coming to Christ, be in our own power, or are the effects of God's Grace in us; and whether conversion do always follow thereupon; I Answer,

There are some things as much in our own power, as any of our natural or moral actions are, that may have a tendency to our conversion: and therefore the Prophet complains of *Israel*, that *they did not frame their doings to turn to the Lord.* Hos. 5. 4. And there is a Sermon in the Morning Exercise, Published in the Year 1661. reputed to be Mr. *Greenhills* (who was a person far from the suspicion of ascribing too much to the power of Nature) which resolves the question, what persons must, and can do towards their own conversion. Now it is certain that men may as well go by their Natural power where the word is preached, as to places of temptation. And there they are within the call of the Gospel; and so are as the impotent persons at the Pool of *Bethesda*, in a nearer capacity of cure, if it please God by his Spirit to *give increase* to what is *planted and watered*: for *faith comes by hearing*: and therefore *the Devil endeavours to divert our minds from what we* Jo. 5. 1, &c. 1 Cor. 3. 5, &c. Rom. 10. 17 Luk. 8. 12.

hear, left we ſhould believe and be ſaved. We ſee further how much it is in man's power to bend his mind to the ſtudy of any particular ſubject: we ſee it plainly not only in mens chuſing in general the ſtudy of Law, Phyſick, or Divinity; but thoſe that addict themſelves to the ſtudy of Divinity, chuſe any particular point thereof to treat on. And they who give not the leaſt ground of hope, that there is any ſaving work upon their own ſouls, will preſs upon others ſuch things as the conſideration of, may incline and diſpoſe them to believing; and men have the ſame natural power to teach themſelves, which they have to *teach others.* But all this will not reach to converſion, any farther than God is pleaſed to give to every one.

Ezek. 18. 14, 28. Pſal. 119. 59. Rom. 2 23.

I will now ſhew you what God doth towards the converſion of ſinners, or which may have a tendency thereto; Some things he doth by his Providence, which he makes many times ſubſervient to his Grace. He that *determines the bounds of mens habitation*, caſts them into ſuch places where they may hear the Goſpel preached plainly, ſeriouſly, by ſuch as *perſuade men*, as knowing the terror of the Lord. And he may exerciſe them under ſome affliction, which

Acts 17. 26.

2 Cor. 5. 11.

may be as a ground-rain ſoaking to the roots, and ſoftning the clods, and turning them to mold, that the ſeed that hath been long buried may ſpring up, of that which perſons have a long time before heard, and never thought of after; when ſome humbling affliction befalls them, *they bethink themſelves, and repent.* But ſuch works fall ſhort many times of true Converſion; and this *goodneſs proves but as the morning cloud, or early dew which paſſes away.* God doth ſomething further by his common grace, reſtraining men from much evil. I confeſs, I think our Saviour, where he ſpeaks of the Spirit's reproving or convincing the World, underſtands the World of ſuch whom he choſe his Diſciples out of, and diſtinguiſhes them from; but I think it is not intended of any inward working of the Spirit upon their hearts, but of thoſe Miracles which he wrought, which confirmed the truth of Chriſt's Reſurrection, and of his Doctrine. By ſuch means as I have now mentioned, men may be brought near the Kingdom of Heaven, but never enter into it.

1 Kings 8. 47.

Hoſ. 6. 4. Gen. 20. 6. Jo. 16. 8.

Mark. 12. 34.

But thoſe preparations which Salvation doth follow upon, *are* (as the ſoberer Papiſts acknowledge) *wrought by Gods Grace and Spirit.* He enlightens the mind

See Caſſander's *conſultation*, p. 45.

mind so as we have a more clear light of Heavenly things, and other apprehensions of them than before we had when it pleases God to *reveal his Son in us*; he that before had no form nor comeliness in our eyes, nor any beauty that we should desire him, is now the chief of Ten thousands in our account, and *altogether lovely*. God draws us to Christ by teaching; tho I do not think that all the efficacy of God's Grace consists in propounding things to the understanding, or in enlightening the understanding to conceive aright of them. But by a secret touch of his Spirit, he so effectually inclines our hearts to him, that we do in a sort *naturally mind spiritual things*: that is, freely, without constraint. This of the Spirit's enlightning the mind, is not a peculiar notion of *Enthusiasts*, but the commonly received Doctrine of sober Protestants. So Bishop *Pierson* on the Article of the Holy Ghost, in his Expostion of the Creed tells us, The work of the Spirit is double, external and general, or internal and particular: By the former he reveals the will of God to the whole Church, by the latter he illuminates the understanding of particular believers, that they may receive the truth; the Holy Ghost working in us an assent

Gal. 1. 16.
Isa. 53. 2.
Cant 5. 10.
Jo. 6. 44, 45.
1 Kings 8. 57.
Phil. 2. 20.

to that which is by the word propounded. Again, God doth by his Spirit convince us spiritually of our state and condition; *and the word, which is the sword of the Spirit, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing to the dividing asunder betwixt the Soul and the Spirit, the joynts and the marrow*; pricking sinners at *the heart*, so as it shall be as a Sword in their bones; and those sins which they went lightly under before (as *David* did under his) are now a heavy burden, too heavy for them. And these convictions he makes as a bearded arrow, which while men endeavour to shake off, torment them more, and they shall not be able to put off the thoughts of their sins, but (as *David*'s) they shall be *continually before them*; so that they shall have no rest in their spirits till they come to Christ.

Eph. 6.17. Heb. 4.12. Acts 2.37. 2 Sam. 12. Psal. 38.4. Psal. 51.3.

But now doubts do ordinarily arise in the minds of Christians, whether they be rightly humbled; whether they be sufficiently humbled; whether they have been long enough under these preparations.

1. They are ready to suspect that their trouble for sin is not kindly, that it is rather from self-love, and fear of punishments, than from love to God, and

and ſenſe of the nature of ſin, as if it againſt God, and diſpleaſing to him.

Now to this I anſwer, That God hath placed our affections in the Soul, as handles to take hold on it, and particularly, Fear: and he doth not only after converſion *put his fear into our hearts* (or at leaſt continue it there) *that we may not depart from him*, but may thereby *depart from evil*; but he gave an intimidating threatning to man in the ſtate of innocency, to be a means to keep him from ſin. And at firſt converſion we ordinarily *flee from the wrath to come*; or to avoid that, *flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is ſet before us.* But there is a frequent exerciſe of Evangelical repentance after Converſion. Men eſpy a Tree in a ſtorm, or in the heat, and betake themſelves to it for ſhelter or ſhade: but when they come at it, they find fruit which they did not at ſuch a diſtance ſee, or in ſuch a fright or trouble conſider; but having found it, they are (at laſt) as much pleaſed with it, as with the covert or umbrage of it. So we *ſit under the ſhadow of Chriſt with great delight, and his fruit is ſweet to our taſte.* In Marriage, Eſtate and Conveniences of Life are firſt treated of; and conjugal love increaſes by ſociety or converſe; you have firſt be-

Jer. 32. 40. Prov. 16. 6. Gen. 2. 17. Matt. 3. 7. Heb. 6. 18. Cant. 2. 3.

taken

taken your ſelves to Chriſt, or deſire to come to him to ſave you from Hell, but doth this (upon ſecond thoughts) ſatisfy you? Can you content your ſelves herewith? or rather do you not deſire that he would *bleſs you in turning you from your iniquities*, and ſay with *Paul*, *Lord, what wouldeſt thou have me to do?* It matters not ſo much what is our firſt motive to bring us to Chriſt, if it do not terminate our deſires, when we have occaſion and opportunity more fully to conſider things. A man may addreſs himſelf to a perſon at firſt on the account of her Portion, to pay his debts, and keep him out of Priſon, and anſwer ſome other occaſions: but upon further knowledge of her, when he is freed from his debts, and extricated out of his troubles, he finds thoſe accompliſhments and qualifications in her which are a more abundant ſatisfaction to him than all her Eſtate. Acts 3.26. Acts 9. 6.

For the fear of Chriſtians that they have not been ſufficiently humbled, and ſo that they ſhould have the wounds of their conſciences healed ſlightly, before they be ſufficiently ſearched or drawn; I anſwer, It is true when perſons have been throughly humbled for their ſin, it may work in them a greater averſion from it, and a more fixed reſolution againſt it. As when *Ephraim* had ſuffered much for their ſin of Idolatry, *they would not ſay any more to the work of their hands, ye are my Gods*: but *would rather ſay, what have I to do any more with Idols?* and tho the *Jews* were much addicted to Idolatry, yet the deſtruction of their Temple and City by the *Caldeans*, and their Captivity in *Babylon*, did much reclaim them from it. Yea, God is pleaſed to deal variouſly with perſons, either Hoſ. 14. 3, 8.

accord-

according as their former converſations have been; where mens ſins have been notorious, God doth many times make their Repentance as notorious, or as the frame and temper of their hearts is: he that inſtructs the husbandman to uſe ſeveral means for getting out his Corn, as the nature of it requires, or as it is threſhed with more eaſe or difficulty; doth himſelf exerciſe perſons under affliction as need requires, till he hath brought their uncircumciſed hearts to be humbled, to accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity. And ſo in bringing Souls to Jeſus Chriſt, he exerciſes them under different degrees of humiliation, as he ſees their ſtate to require; or as he intends for the future to deal with them: But thoſe that have to do with troubled Souls, or ſuch as are humbled under a ſenſe of their ſin, ſhould take heed of tampering too much in keeping them down, leſt they do as Phyſicians; who that they may throughly ſubdue a diſeaſe, bring their Patients ſo low, that they cannot recover their ſtrength, and raiſe them up again: and let Chriſtians themſelves take heed, leſt out of a miſtaken modeſty or humility, they think they can never be ſufficiently humbled, *and ſo refuſe to be comforted.* It is not for us to teach our Phyſicians, or to preſcribe to God how he ſhould deal with us: I have heard of an Eminent Man, who (in a deep humility) deſired that God would ſhew him his ſin in its own colours; or let him ſee the deformity of it, that he might be yet more humbled for it; and God did ſhew it to him ſo as to make him go mourning to his grave. And I have likewiſe heard of a wowan, that made the like requeſt to God, thinking ſhe could never be ſufficiently humbled for her ſin. But it pleaſed God

Iſa. 28. 26.

Levit 16. 41.

Pſalm 77. 2.

to give her ſuch a ſight of her Sin, that (like *Heman*) *while ſhe ſuffer'd his terrors, ſhe was diſtracted*; and in that Condition killed her own Child. It is the end that determines the manner and meaſure of the means leading thereto. And that Humiliation and Conviction is ſufficient, that makes us willing to forſake our Sin, and come to Chriſt. A kindly Sorrow and Trouble for Sin, may grow upon us (as I lately ſaid) after Converſion, and Senſe of Pardon. Pſalm 88. 15. Jer. 31. 19. Ezek. 16. 63.

For the other doubt of Chriſtians, that they have not been long enough under the pangs of the New Birth, (as they ſpeak) and know not whether they may not be too forward to believe.

I anſwer, That if by believing, we mean *a perſwaſion or confidence, that our ſins are pardoned*; we may believe too ſoon. And Mr. *Marſhall* (in the forementioned Treatiſe) notwithſtanding all that he hath ſaid of Aſſurance being Eſſential to Faith, acknowledges, That many muſt be taught to doubt, whether their preſent State be good, and that it is Humility ſo to do; that we muſt find out the certainty and ſincerity of our Faith and Obedience, by Self-examination, before we can have a well-grounded Aſſurance, that we are in a ſtate of Grace and Salvation already; and that ſuch an Aſſurance belongs to the reflect Act of Faith, and is not of the Eſſence of that Faith whereby we are juſtified and ſaved. But if by believing, we mean *coming to God by Jeſus Chriſt*, we ſhould *make haſte and not delay to keep this command*, as well as others. We are not to think, that as the Queens of *Perſia* were to be prepared *Six months with oyl of myrrh, and ſix months with ſweet odours, and other things*, before they might P. 172. Pſal. 119. 60. 1 John 3. 23. Eſther 2. 12.

might be admitted to the King; so we must continue such a time under Humiliation, and so long under Contrition, before we may presume to come to Christ. *For tho* (it is true) *we should count the cost* of being his Disciples, for want of which many (as it is in the Parable of the Sower) are forward to hear the word with joy, and believe for a time, but afterwards fall away; yet it is not necessary that we suspend our believing till we have throughly weighed every thing. It is not in this case as in ordinary Marriages, where Persons should inform themselves well of every particular before they engage, because when once engaged it will be too late to repent, or to make a better choice. But it is herein, as if a Person had one propounded to her, that she must Marry, or be undone; and one who (they know) will put her upon nothing, or require nothing of her which she can justly except against, in whom there is nothing that she can dislike; there can be no danger or inconvenience in finishing such a Match, without further delay. So if there were any other Name whereby we could be saved; if Christ did put us upon any thing, or require any thing of us which Heaven will not countervail; or if he would not have us yet come to him, we might defer our believing. And tho something is to be done (as I have said) to make us willing to come to Christ, yet there is no long time required for the Soul to continue in a State of Preparation; the whole Work hath been done at once, as we see in those that were converted at *Peter's* Sermons, in *Paul*, in the Jaylor: As Mr. *Charnock* doth ingeniously illustrate it: The preparation of the Subject is necessary,

Luke 14. 28.
Matth. 13. 21.
Acts 2.
Acts 9.
Acts 16.
Vol. 2. 148.

but this preparation may be at the same time with the conveyance of the Divine Nature. As a warm Seal may both prepare the hard Wax, and convey the Image to it by one and the same touch.

CHAP. XI.

I Will finish all with a few words about the Necessity of Holiness, both for the allaying of those heats that are amongst some about it, and for preventing or removing the Prejudices of Men against it. There is no need of distinguishing betwixt the Necessity of Holiness or Obedience, to the beginning of our Justification, and to the Continuation of it, among those that (according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*) believe the Perseverance of the Saints, and that there is no Intercision of Justification. But there is a Necessity of Holiness in those that are justified; for tho we may be justified at first by such a Faith as is only in tendency to obedience, but wants time and opportunity to put it self forth; yet, where Faith is unfeigned (and only such Faith justifies) it will, as there is occasion and opportunity, *work by love*; so, Gal. 5. 6. that *whom God doth justify in the name of Christ,* 1 Cor. 6. *he doth also sanctify by his spirit*; therefore *with-* 11. *out holiness none shall see God*; Yet we are not Heb. 12. to think that Holiness is required on the same 14. account with Faith, much less in co-ordination with the righteousness of Christ. I doubt it is a piece of ordinary Christian's Divinity, that the righteousness of Christ serves only as grains of allowance to make our righteousness current where it is too light. But

as Christ hath no sharers in his Mediation, neither is there any thing needful to be added to his satisfaction; but we are acquitted only upon the account thereof; and whatever we do, serves not for so much as grains of allowance to make his satisfaction currant with God for us.

But yet it is necessary upon other accounts not only because God will insist on it, as a thing condecent to his Holiness, *who is of purer eyes than to behold evil*, but there is a natural *necessity of it as a means to our chief end* which is to *glorify God, and enjoy him*. As when *Nebuchadnezzar* chose some of the Captivity to serve under him, he would not only have them well-favoured, and fed with the King's Meat and Wines, that they might appear sightly before the King; but had such chosen as had good Natural Abilities, and had them taught the Learning and Language of the *Caldeans*, that they might be fit to do him Service. So God doth not only delight in Holiness, but indeed without that, we are not fit to serve him; we are *naturally reprobate to every good work*; and we must be God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to those good Works which he hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. But it is likewise necessary, that we may *enjoy that happiness which he hath prepared for us*. He brings in the *Highways and Hedges*, the meanest and most unworthy to partake of his Glory. But if a King should invite those that are Sick, and that of some loathsome Disease, to eat at his Table; if he would of his Bounty and Goodness dispense with the smell and loathsomeness of their Disease; it would be no favour to them. (in the Condition wherein

Heb. 1. 13.

Dan. 1. 3, &c.

Tit. 1. 16.

Luke 14. 23.

ey are) to ſit at the King's Table, while their ickneſs makes them nauſeate every thing ere, and the ſmell of Meat to be offenſive them: But it would be a favour indeed, to e firſt recovered from their Diſeaſe, that ey might not be aſhamed to appear in ſuch place, and that they might be able to reliſh eir Meat and Drink. This is our caſe, as e are unfit to appear before God (in the ate wherein we are) to whom our inner-an is as naked and open, as our outward-an is to men like our ſelves. So we are al-together uncapable of that Comfort and Hap-pineſs, which is to be found in the Preſence of God, or of the foretaſts of it, which he gives his People in this Life. Whatever Ex-cellency there is in any thing, we muſt have a Senſe or Faculty correſpondent therewith, or elſe we cannot underſtand or enjoy any thing of it. There is a Beauty in a Roſe, and in other Flowers, which thoſe that have their ſight may enjoy the pleaſure of; but there is further a ſweet ſmell, or fragrancy in them, which the ſight intermeddles not with; and there muſt be another ſenſe, of Smelling, to enjoy the pleaſure thereof. So neither can we enjoy the pleaſure of Wine without the ſenſe of Taſting, or Muſick without the ſenſe of Hearing. So likewiſe, if a man do not underſtand any thing of Learning, or have no Genius thereto, he cannot take any pleaſure in reading Books, or in Academical Exerciſes, which are better than Wine and Muſick to o-thers. So, if a man be not ſanctified or re-newed after the Image of God, tho he would diſpenſe with his Sin, and admit him to Hea-ven, he would ſay of it (as of the Service of God) *what a wearineſs is it*; he might be Mal. 1. 13.

content

content to be there to be kept out of Hell, here he might be content to be in a place where there is a Sermon, to be sheltered from a storm. It was to no purpose for *Barzillai* to go to *David's* Court, when nature was
2 Sam. 19. 35. decayed in him that he could not enjoy any of the pleasures of it.

If it be said, this doth not infer any necessity of Holiness here in this life; for God can in a moment at death fit us for Heaven, which is easily done, when we lay down this body, which is both a clog and a temptation to the Soul, not only as it influences the Soul, but as most of our sins are in order to provide for the body, or to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. I answer,

There is a necessity of Holiness here, partly as there is such an inseparable connexion betwixt that and *Faith which works by love*, and
Gal. 5. 6. Jam. 2. 24. *is dead without works*: this purifies the heart,
Acts 15. 9. *overcomes the world*; and the Apostle spends a
1 John 5. 4. whole chapter in setting forth the virtue of it. Besides, it is the pleasure of God to form
Heb. 11. a people for himself, that they may in this
Isa 43. 21. world *shew forth his praise*; and hath redeemed
Titus 2. 14. us to be *a peculiar people to himself*, that we may serve him *in holiness and righteousness before him*
Luk. 1. 74, 75. *all the days of our life*. He would have our light shine so before men, *that they seeing our good works, may glorify our father which is in Heaven*: so that we do hereby keep up his Honour, and a Remembrance of him in the world. We have hereby likewise some prelibations or foretastes of future Glory, which (as I have already said) we are not capable of without
Numb. 13. 23. Holiness; God would have some of the fruits of the Land of *Canaan* brought to the people in the Wilderness, that (seeing what goodly

fruit

fruit it was) they might be the more encouraged to go to poſſeſs it, notwithſtanding the difficulties and dangers that they were to encounter with; and there is nothing that doth more raiſe our thoughts of future Glory, than the earneſt that we have of it here; which we can no more underſtand without Holineſs, than we can the ſweetneſs and virtue of Wine by hearſay without taſting: We have hereby likewiſe a more lively ſenſe of the Goodneſs of God to us, in delivering us from the ſinful ſtate wherein we are by nature, than we could have, if we were perfected at once at death. If a man be ſuddenly ſurpriz'd with an Apoplexy, and immediately at once recovered from it, he hath not ſuch a ſenſe of the Mercy that he hath received therein, as one that is recovered by degrees from a Fever, or ſome other Diſeaſe, wherein he hath felt much of pain, ſickneſs, weakneſs; and hath not only known what it was to be revived by Cordials, to be helped by Friends, to be eaſed by reſt in his bed; but after his recovery he can reflect with pleaſure upon his former condition when it is paſt, and more prize his preſent Eaſe and Health. So thoſe who have with the Apoſtle groaned under a body of ſin and death, will not only reflect with pleaſure upon the ſupplies of God's Grace which they have had to ſtrengthen them in their Spiritual conflict, and to fortify them againſt temptations: but will afterwards with more thankfulneſs acknowledge the goodneſs of God, in giving them the victory through our Lord Jeſus, and bringing them into a ſtate of perfection, where they ſhall be freed from all annoyance of ſin and temptations, which they could never have ſo well underſtood, had

it

it not been for the experience which they had in that middle state, wherein they found a conflict while they were under cure, and recovering by degrees. So that it is a great mistake in any, to think that holiness is not necessary, if we may be justified without it; that justification is our great privilege, and holiness a burden imposed upon us; which we must be content to submit to, in consideration of so great a favour as the pardon of our sins. Holiness is rather our honour and happiness, the present fruit of our being the servants of God here; and Christ doth not only save us from our sins in *delivering us from the wrath to come*, but by *blessing us in turning us from our iniquities*.

Rom. 6. 22.
1 Thes. 1. 10.
Acts 3. 26.

Thus have I briefly touched several things which more Learned men have treated of with more clearness and exactness: but I have not written to supply the defects of others, or to add to what they have done; but considering that this small Treatise might fall into the hands of some, to whom it may not happen to read larger and more learned Books, I have adventured to write something, which I hope may be of some use to them for the right understanding of the important truths therein handled: desiring my Readers candidly to interpret what hath been well intended, and to bear with that weakness which I am as ready to own as any can be to charge upon me.

FINIS.

A REMEDY AGAINST TROUBLE:

IN A

DISCOURSE

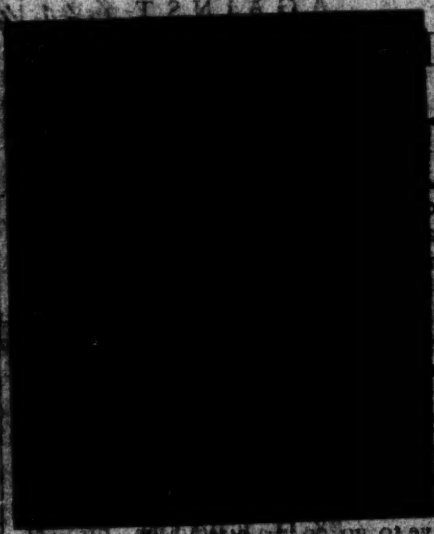
ON

JOHN XIV. 1.

Wherein something is also briefly attempted for clearing the Nature of Faith; Of Justification; Of the Covenant of Grace; Assurance; the Witness, Seal and Earnest of the Spirit. And Preparation for Conversion; of the Necessity of Holiness.

By H. LUKIN.

LONDON:
Printed for *Thomas Cockrill* at the *Three Legs* in the *Poultry* over-against the *Stocks-Market*. 1694.



TO THE READER.

THE ensuing Treatise is the Substance of some Sermons, which I transcribed at the desire of a Friend. I designed chiefly a Practical Discourse; and if I have sometimes fallen upon controverted Points, it is not from any delight that I take therein. I am not of *Ab-* 2 Sim. 1.
ner's Temper, to make a sport of Di- 14.
gladiations amongst Brethren; neither should I with *Alipius*, have been tempted to be a Spectator of the Gladiators among the *Romans*. As in passing through the Streets in *London*, I would not plod on without minding my way, or resolve to go on in a direct Line, turning every one out of the way, without giving the least place to them; but chuse my way to escape the Dirt so far as I could, and turn my self so as to pass with the least trouble to my self,

 or

or offence to others; so in passing through the World, I would not despise my way, walking at random, or at adventures; nor rudely check all that I meet with, or that stand in my way; *but take heed to my way; ponder the paths of my feet*, that I may (so far as I can) *keep my self unspotted of the world*, and escape the pollutions of it; and that I may (*if it be possible*) *live peaceably with all men, giving none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God*; neither exalperating others, nor giving others occasion to exasperate my self. Sharp Humours discompose the Soul, as well as the Body, and hinder the thriving thereof. Therefore the Apostle prays for the *Thessalonians, That the Lord would make them to increase and abound in love one towards another, and towards all men, to the end he might establish their hearts unblameable in holiness.* A Charitable frame of spirit tending much to the promoting thereof. Yet we cannot wholly avoid treating of things that are disputable; and it is an happy work, if any could thereby allay the Heats that are amongst Christians, and set them right in their thoughts about those things that are controvered, both to maintain a good

Prov. 19. 16.
Levit. 26. 21.
Psalm 39. 1.
Prov. 4. 26.
James 1. 27.
2 Peter 2. 20.
Rom. 12. 18.
1 Cor. 10. 32.
1 Thes. 3. 12, 13.

Under-

Understanding and Accord among themselves, and to direct them in their Addresses and Applications to God. I have endeavoured to bring Water, not Oyl to the Fire. I know Water will make unquenched Lime burn, but I hope I shall not meet with any of that Temper. We should *with good advice make war.* We should consider whether we are able to deal with those that we undertake a War against. But tho we think that we are so, we should consider whether we have any just Cause to begin a War. There were great Preparations against the Two Tribes and an half on the other side Jordan, the rest of the Tribes fearing that they would *bring wrath upon the whole Congregation of Israel*, but when matters came to be examined, they were pleased with the account that the Two Tribes and an half gave of what they had done. So many are ready to undertake a Religious War or Dispute, against their Brethren, as if they were subverting the Christian Religion, or undermining the Foundation thereof; but when they come to examine matters, they find there is no cause of such heats or emotions of spirit; but those things

Prov. 20. 18.

Joshua 22. 18, &c.

which they are offended at, are either the private Opinions, or at least the rash and unadvised Expressions of some particular Persons, which the rest of those that are supposed to be of their Party do disown. This is very ordinary amongst all sorts of persons; and I know no sort of persons that will vouch every thing which is spoken by all that rank themselves among them; let every one bear their own burthen, and let not others answer any further for what they say, than they have given their consent thereto. But sometimes we may mistake Persons, and impute such things to them as they do not believe. Many do not read mens own Works, but judge of their Opinions by what they read in those that write against them, who often chuse out such passages as may give them most advantage against them, or which they can most easily answer, or will represent them as most blame-worthy to others, and justify their rough treatment of them. It is rare to find in Polemical Writings, such Candour and Clearness as is observed in a late Writer, Mr. *Le Blanc*, who in stating many of the Differences betwixt us and the Papists, renders

renders himself suspected by some on both sides; some Protestants thinking he is too favourable to the Papists in representing their Opinions; and some Papists have thought that he hath been partial in the account that he gives of the Doctrine of the Protestants; and yet both Papists and Protestants acquit him from wronging them, in setting down their own Opinions. Now it is a great disadvantage to any to have some Periods or Sentences taken out of their Writings, when we do not see on what occasion they write such things, nor what they write in other places, which may allay or qualify such harsh Expressions. I have seen a Letter which was so written, that if it were read at length every Line of it, did import one thing: but if it were so folded or turned down, as to hide the end of every Line, it was of a quite different tenor or signification. So a partial representation of mens minds, may subject them to great mistakes or misconstructions; yea, we may mistake men many times, tho we read their Writings our selves; we may say of the most Learned Writers, as is said of the *Egyptians*; *They are men, and not God*; they cannot see all 3. Isaiah 31.

all things at one single view; and when men are intent on one thing they will call in the service of some *Hypothesis* which may be for their present turn, and allown it at another time, when they see that it will not well agree with some other Opinion which they would confirm. This is a weakness that I have observed in some of the most Learned men that I have read, especially when they write much, and forget at one time what they have written at another; and it may be, have given an Interpretation of Scripture at one time, when it might serve an *Hypothesis*, which they have answered themselves on another occasion, when some other Point which they have been treating of would not bear their former Interpretation. There must be an allowance made in such cases, for mens over-sights and infirmities. Sometimes men do impute to others the Consequences of their Opinions, and so represent their Opinions as very dangerous; but we should not charge upon persons what they do not expresly own. It is true indeed, that from truth follows nothing but truth, but from some small Error, dangerous Errors may follow; and few can

see

see the utmost tendency of all their Opinions, or what Consequences may be knit to each other. Therefore the Respondent, or he that Answers in Disputations, must always be wary what he grants, or what Concessions he makes, lest he should be driven to an Absurdity. As we cannot guard against all Accidents, so neither can we see every thing that may be deduced from what we may maintain, nor the Inferences which may be multiplied from it. Sometimes men love to express themselves in Rhetorical Strains, which must not be brought to a rigid Test or Examen. It is very natural to us to use *Hyperboles*, or Excesses of Speech; yea, God himself frequently uses them; they serving to raise our minds to some adequate conception of those things which plain words would not heighten them to. So God promises that he would multiply *the seed of Abraham, as the dust of the earth*, or *as the sand on the sea-shore*. Gen. 15. 15.

So he says, *He will take the names of Baalim out of their mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name*. Gen. 22. 17. Hosea 2. 17.

Whereas *Paul* doth afterwards mention this name; and it is impossible that it should wholly depart out of Rom. 11. 4.

their mind. But he would thereby signify their great detestation of Idolatry. So where our Saviour bids his Disciples that they should *salute no man by the way*: it is not likely that he would forbid all expressions of Civility and Courtesy: but he seems only to warn them against long and tedious Compliments, and Conferences, which might retard them in their work which he sent them about; the Prophet giving the like charge to his Servant when he sent him in haste: so in controversial Writings there is something of like nature, which we call ἀμυτρία ἀνθολκῆς whereby men (that they may make it seem that their Adversaries depart far from the truth) run as far as they can on the other side, or say more than in a strict sense can be admitted. Hence it is that some of our first Reformers (the more to exaggerate the opinnion of the Papists of the necessity of good works) have used such harsh expressions, which are so liable to just Exception; as, that it is the first and the last, the worst and most damnable Heresy that ever was on Earth, To teach that good Works are necessary to Salvation; and

Luke 10. 4.

2 Kings 4. 29.

and that good Works are so far from conducing to Salvation, that they are rather pernicious. When men will take such liberty to themselves in expressing their minds, they subject themselves to great prejudice; but perhaps, if they were to explain themselves in these things, they might be found to have a tolerable meaning in them. It is too well known, what differences there have been betwixt the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* about the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. Yet about 100 years ago, when divers Learned men of both Parties met to confer about it, upon explaining their minds to each other in a calm and peaceable way, they were so fully agreed and satisfied, that they embraced each other as Brethren, and so parted. So that the differences among Christians are not always from Error of Judgement, but a Strife of Words, through their unhappy expressing themselves, and mistaking each others minds.

There is another thing which I have observed to be an occasion of many differences amongst us, and that is the use of School-terms, or terms of Art, which indeed are very compendious, and

and set off mens conceptions in few words, which would otherwise require a large circumlocution or compass of Speech. Yet they have this inconvenience, while men would be brief, they many times prove obscure, and so as *Abbreviations* in writing (which were more used, as is most likely, before Printing, when they were forced to write all) have occasioned many errors, and multiplied various readings: so *Abbreviations* in speaking have multiplied Controversies, and more time hath been spent about the meaning of some terms of Art, or School-distinctions, than would have been necessary to have expressed the same thing in many more words. Therefore it is rightly observed by the Lord *Verulam*, and other Learned men, that the Volumes of the Schoolmen are greater much than the first writings of the Fathers, from whence the Master of the Sentences made his first Collection. For while they purpose to abridge, they give cause to dilate. For the sum or abridgment by contraction becomes obscure, the obscurity requries Expolition, and the Expo-on is deduced into large Commentaries, which grow to be more full than

then the Original Writings, from whence the ſum was firſt extracted. And whoſoever ſhall look into Polemical Writings, ſhall find that a great part of them is taken up about ſtrife of words, and many of their queſtions about ſecond notions, or fitting School-terms to matters of Religion. Hence it is that Philoſophy is made ſuch a neceſſary Handmaid to Divinity, as of old they would ſometimes appeal to the *Heathen* Philoſophers in their Theological Diſputations, because their queſtions were about ſuch terms as had been brought out of their Schools into Divinity. And hereby they do (in a manner) keep the ordinary ſort of Chriſtians in ignorance of many things, by involving them in School-terms: as others do by locking them up in an unknown Tongue; even thoſe Learned men from whoſe Writings (as I have obſerved) the Sentences (which are the Text on which the Schoolmen Comment) were firſt Collected, would be as much put to it to underſtand their Writings, as they would be to underſtand the Language now ſpoken in *Italy*, after it hath ſuffered ſuch changes through

the

the concourse of so many people to *Rome*, but especially through the Invasions of several Nations. There are many things made unintelligible to ordinary persons, which if divested of those terms of Art wherewith they are disguised, and cloathed in our ordinary Language, would be plain to all. Every one knows what it is to ease Pain, to expel Wind, to cause Sleep, to provoke Sweat, but they know not what is *Anodyne*, or *Narcotick*; what is *Carminative*, *Hysterick*, *Diaphoretick*. Those that well understand what is Red, or Blue, or Black, or Green, do not know the meaning of Gules, or Azure, or Sable, or Vert. So in Religion, many things that are plain, are made obscure by the terms that they are expressed in. But if we see plainly that persons are in an error, let us not exaggerate or aggravate their fault, as they do the Crimes of Malefactors in drawing up their Indictments: as if every thing that they are charged with, were done Feloniously, Traiterously, Maliciously, of Set purpose, out of a wicked intention; we should be cautious of charging every one with *rebelling against the*

the light, or as *being condemned of him-* Job 24. 13.
self: that hath means which wee think Tit. 3. 11.
sufficient to convince him. We can
hardly imagine what influence the
course of mens studies, the company
that they converse with, their prejudi-
ces, and interest, have upon their judg-
ments. Who knows the power of
interest? *A gift blinds the wise, and* Exod. 23.
perverts the words of the righteous. It 8.
is more to blind the eyes, than to Prov. 18.
pervert the Will, or sway the Af- 16.
fections. But it first commends a
man to the favour of another, and
then it determines his mind to the
study or consideration of such things
as do (unawares) beguile him into a
good opinion of his Cause, so as he
pronounces sentence in favour of
him. So Interest sways mens studies,
and chuses their company, and these
insensibly determine their judgments.
Again, it should not seem strange to
us if we do not see all men rise up
to some Learned men, which we
think have so clearly demonstrated
things, that nothing can be further
objected against them, not any fur-
ther doubt made of them. For there
are many that are not easily deter-
mined in their judgements by the

Writings

Writings of learned men; while they consider, that such persons may be (and often are) influenced by their Interest and Affections, (which do easily beguile their judgments) to say what they can, and can say almost what they please. As one that had made a Learned Discourse about the Trinity (for which he was much commended and admired) said, He had much confirmed and advanced the truth of Christ; but if he were minded to deal crosly, he knew how with stronger Reasons and Arguments to confute the same. And a very Learned man (known to many that are yet living) told one (who related it to me) that he could write a Book as big as *Suarez* his *Metaphysicks*, to prove a Deity, and then write another as big to refute it. These things considered, would incline us to more mutual forbearance, and Charity. Many that we look upon as erroneous (if we did rightly understand them) might (perhaps) be found to be of our mind, and to think the same things with our selves. Others that do err, yet (as one said) will not be Hereticks; that is, will not persist in their er-

Simon Churmay at Paris, 1201.

ror, if they be convinced of it: which it is not so easy a matter as many imagine to be; as *Augustin* said to the *Manichees*, *They rage against you, that know not with how great labour the truth is found out, and with how great difficulty errors are avoided.* God hath left many things in his word clear and plain wherein most Christians do consent: but other things for the exercise of our diligence, and mutual forbearance, in this state of Imperfection wherein we see but in part.

THE

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A REMEDY AGAINST TROUBLE.

JOHN XIV. 1.

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.

CHAP. I.

THE design of Christ in these Words, is either to prepare his Disciples for receiving what he had to say to them in this his last Sermon before his Death; *For sorrow had filled their hearts.* And till that is allayed John 16. men 6.

the touchstone, though it may not hold at the balance without some grains of allowance. If we will deal plainly and faithfully with our own hearts, we may appeal to God for the sincerity of our love to our brethren, as Peter did for
Jo. 21. 17. the sincerity of his love to Christ, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. And if our hearts condemn us*
1 Jo. 3. 21. *not, we may have confidence towards God.*

2*dly*, Brethren may deal unkindly with each other, when they meet in the dark, or when they meet with each other in disguise: that is, through ignorance Christians may mistake their brethren, or those that are their brethren may sometimes appear unlike themselves. But where it is true love, it is not to those of our own way or opinion only; it is not proportionable to what they resemble us in, but according to their measure of Holiness, wherein they are like to God: where love is right, Christians love others more that are eminent in Grace and Holiness, tho differing in their judgments from us, than those that are of our mind and way in some things of less importance, but more defective in the more essential parts of Religion.

3*dly*, There may be differences among Christians, where there is a sincere love

to

to each other; and the more zeal they have for the Truth, and the Service of God; the greater their differences may be. As differences may sometimes happen in Families, between persons that have an entire Affection to each other, and these differences being about things that do nearly concern their Family, as about the government and management of their Children; the greater their Affection is towards their Children, and care for them, the warmer are their debates about them. Thus it happens among Christians that cannot be of one mind in things pertaining to the Honour and Service of God; the greater their zeal is, the greater are their differences: and however Christian prudence and meekness should make us forbear each other in love, yet that perfection is not found among Christians, as always to make them carry it with due Calmness, Tenderness, and Moderation to each other. We have an Example in *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two excellent Persons, and dear Companions in Labours and Sufferings for Christ; yet they were exasperated so against each other, that they parted and went several ways, tho the thing which they parted about seems to be of no great moment. Act. 15. 36. &c.

I may

I may not stand to examine particular objections, which they make against other evidences of saving Grace: But consider what provision they have for the satisfying of Christians concerning their Spiritual state. The Apostle's *power was given him not for destruction, but for edification.* We should, at least, if we destroy the foundations on which Christians build their hopes and comfort, teach them whereon they should build them. Now for this they send them to that Spirit which is so oft called the Comforter, who doth as they suppose speak particularly in the heart of a Believer, *Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*; and when the Spirit saith this to the Soul, this silences all objections which did before disturb and disquiet it. I know God can when he pleases satisfy the Soul, so as there shall no doubt remain to trouble our spirits; but tho he that is awake may know certainly that he is so, and that he is not in a Dream: yet he that is in a dream may verily think that he is awake. So he that hath the witness of the Spirit, may certainly know that it is no delusion: but he that is under a delusion, may verily think that he hath the testimony of the Spirit. Therefore that we may not mistake in this matter,

2 Cor. 13. 10.

ery they say the Spirit of God never speaks to the heart of any believer, but it speaks according to the word of Grace revealed; and so I believe. But I know not well how to reconcile it to what was before objected, against our inferring our Justification from our Love to the Brethren. For if we cannot find in our selves that Love which the Apostle speaks of, all is nothing without it; therefore it is hard to receive any Testimony concerning our Spiritual estate, where we have not ground to believe that we have this Love in us, notwithstanding the many properties of it which are there added. Far be it from me to derogate from the work of the Spirit in satisfying and comforting troubled Souls, whose comforts are my greatest hope in the time of trouble, and at the hour of death. I am not of those that the Philosopher speaks of, that measure Vertue by themselves, and think none attain to that which themselves have not attained to: therefore will not deny any such way of Assurance as I have not had experience of. I desire (without the offence of those, in comparison with whom I think of my self as the Spies did *when they saw the Giants*, Numb. 13. 33.) to speak my mind

1 Cor. 13. 3.

mind in this matter, after long search and often renewed thoughts. I question not but God can speak, or communicate himself to our spirits, as Angels do to each other: yea, I am fully satisfied, that he doth thus speak Peace to his people at the hour of death, or before, or after some great Conflict or Temptation: as those may know that have either conversed with serious experienced Christians, or but read the Lives and Deaths of Martyrs, or sufferers for Christ. Such may observe what sudden transports of joy eminent Christians have sometimes had, which have not been the effect of much search, Tryal, and Examination of their spiritual Estate by the Word of God, which they have not had freedom and presence of mind for, under such fears, Pains, Bodily weakness, as they have laboured under: much less from any briskness of spirits, or working of fancy: but it must be imputed to God's immediate support, *pouring Gladness into their hearts, shedding abroad his love in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost given to them.* But to suppose this to be God's *ordinary way* of dealing with his People, and to allow them no *Assurance* but what God gives them in such an *immediate way*, would leave many so

Ps. 4. 7.

Rom. 5. 5.

humble.

humble serious Christians, (that dare not boast of what God hath not wrought in them) under perpetual doubts and fears. And because many are ready to think that what the Scripture speaks about the witness of the Spirit, the seal of the Spirit, and the earnest of the Spirit, do imply some immediate way of the Spirit, communicating himself to Christians: I will endeavour to shew you what may be the true and proper import of such Expressions.

As for that, the Spirit's witnessing with our spirits, or to our spirits, *that we are the Children of God*, supposing what is before said about his immediate Comforts in extraordinary Tryals and Temptations, which seems to be the state of Christians at that time; the Spirit may ordinarily be said to witness with our spirit, or to our spirits. Rom. 8. 16.

1st, With our spirit; and for the clearing of this, we must consider, that whatever is written in Scripture, is the Testimony of the Spirit, he doth therein testify; and it is said particularly, that *the Holy Ghost is a witness* to us of the perfection of Christ's Sacrifices and this he is in the Scripture, or what he hath there testified, as is 1 Pet. 1. 11. Heb. 10. 15.

evident

evident from the words following. Now it no where saith in Scripture, that this or that person is the Son of God, our Names may be written in Heaven, but not in the Scripture: so it is said to testify of Christ, but not by Name, but describing him by his works, which *verse* 36. are said to testify of him, for Joh. 3. 39. *to bear witness that his Father had sent him*: these put together, the testimony of the Scripture, and his own works did witness that he was the *Messiah*. Thus the Spirit of God witnesses in us who are the Sons of God by giving Characters whereby they may be known, as *walking after the Spirit*, *loving the Brethren*, &c. Thus we know by the Spirit of God speaking in the word: but that we do these things we know by our own spirits, which we must appeal to, and examine about it, this being the Candle of the Lord which searches the hidden parts of the Prov. 20. belly, that is, our most secret thoughts, 27. and the witness thereof is the testimo- 2 Cor. 1. ny of our Consciences; therefore if we 12. would have the witness of the Spirit, we must see in the Scriptures what that witnesses about those that shall be saved, and then consult our own spirits, and if we find those things in ourselves that do accompany Salvation,

the

the Conclusion follows, that we shall be saved.

But further, it may be said to witness *in or with our* spirits, as it witnesses in its *effects*, which the Spirit it self may be properly said to do: things are said to witness in Scripture, when they are a real proof of any thing, as *the rust of Silver and Gold witnesseth against the owners*, Jam. 5. 3. So mens wickedness saith, or testifies, *that they have no fear of God before their* Psal. 36. 1. *Eyes*. So persons are said to testify or bear witness by their Works, as the Holy Ghost is a witness of Christ's Exaltation, by the Miracles which he wrought; and *God did bear the Apostles* Act. 5. 32. *witness both with signs and wonders, and divers gifts of the Holy Ghost*; and thus Heb. 2. 4. the Spirit bears witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God, Ezek. 36. 27. by that filial frame or Spirit of Adoption *which he puts in us*. And by bringing forth in us the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 1. 16. he *reveals his Son in us*. *We knowing that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he hath* 1 Jo. 3. 24. *given us*.

I will now proceed to speak of the *sealing* of the Spirit; and I desire this may be observed, that whenever the Scripture speaks thereof, it doth not speak of the Covenant, or of our Salvation being sealed to us; but of *our being*

2 Cor. 1. 22 Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30. *ing sealed.* Now we must know, that a Seal is not a Natural, but an Instituted Sign: and it being a particular mark belonging to some person, it signifies his ratifying or confirming any thing that it is applied to. And Seals were used in three Cases: 1*st.* For the confirming of Writings, being an Evidence of a man's consent to what he hath set his Seal to. 2*dly*, It is for keeping a thing sure, as the *Lyons Den*, and Christ's Sepulchre, not by force; Wax is not proper for that; but for securing it so as none can meddle with it but it will be known. 3*dly*, It was used for marking things that they might be known to whom they did belong, and to distinguish them from other mens; and they did not only mark things or Goods, but Persons. We read in *Heathen* Authors, as *Plutarch* in *Nicias*, that they did sometimes mark their Captives or Servants in the Forehead. And hence probably the Scripture speaks so oft of Marking and Sealing the Servants of God; so the Beast is said to mark those that did enjoy any privileges under him. Thus when God *doth set apart* any for himself, as *David* expresses it, he seals them, or marks them for his own. And as the Emperors had not only their Superscription,

Esth 3 12. Jer. 32. 10. Dan. 6. 17.

Ezek. 9. 4. Rev. 7. 3, 4. 9. 4. Rev. 13. 16. Ps. 4. 3.

tion, but their Image impressed on their Coin; so God impresses his own Image on his People, or renews them after his own Image. Matth. 22: 20. Col. 3. 10.

And if it be said, That they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise *after they believed*, as if it were not the Impression of the Image of God upon us at our first Conversion, but some work of the Spirit afterwards.

Answer. Those that make this sealing to be the confirming or assuring our Justification and Salvation to us, suppose it is done at our first believing in the first Act of Faith: So, if they make this Objection, let them Answer it themselves. I add, that this is not an Act finished in a moment, as a Seal may be set upon Wax; but a Progressive Work, and the Impression is made clear and deeper by degrees: *We being changed into his image from glory to glory.* 2 Cor. 3. 18.

And lastly, The *Greeks* take much liberty in the change of their Tenses, and often is the same Tense used here, which is used where it is said, *he that believes shall be saved.* Mark 16. 16.

I will now add something briefly about the earnest of the Spirit, which the Scripture speaks sometimes of. By the help of which places it is evident, that 2 Cor. 1. 22. Chap. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 14.

that by the earnest of the Spirit is means the Spirit as an earnest, as

Rom. 4. 11. *sign of Circumcision* is Circumcision as a Sign. Some take the word (which is borrowed from the *Eastern* Language in a large sense, for a *pledge*, *pawn*, *earnest*; but in this case it is properly rendred *earnest*; for there is a great difference betwixt a Pawn, or Pledge, and an Earnest: The former is something deposited or left with another for securing what hath been taken up or borrowed; and it is something of another kind, and of greater (or at least equal) Value with what it is put in pawn for. But an earnest is something given at the making of a Bargain, for the ratifying and confirming of it; and it is of the same kind with what is afterwards to be paid, and but a small part of it. Now we can have *no Pledge* of future Glory, there being nothing of equal value to it; but God gives us his Spirit, or as he doth sometimes express it, *of his Spirit*; of the Gifts and

1 John 3. 24. Chap. 4. 13. Graces of it; and this is the Earnest of our Inheritance, Grace differing from Glory in degree only, not in kind. As

1 Cor. 13. 9, 12. here we know *but in part, but then shall know as we are known*; and as our Knowledg, so our Love and Joy shall then be perfected; and what we receive

here

here of the Spirit, doth assure us of receiving the full sum of the Glory promised. And as the Earnest that we receive at the making of a Bargain, doth not only confirm the Bargain, but is of some *Use* to us at present, tho it be but a small part of the whole; so those Graces of the Spirit which he here works in us, are (in the exercise thereof) our greatest Comfort and Happiness in this World, and are Prelibations and Foretasts of our future Happiness, and are therefore called *the first Fruits of the Spirit*; being a small part of the full Harvest of Glory, which we shall reap hereafter. In short, We do *by the Spirit of God know the things that are freely given to us of God*: He enabling us to *discern Spiritual things*, and to make a right Judgment of them; *renewing us in the spirit of our minds*, as well as in our inferior Faculties; so, that as there is a saving work upon the whole Soul, which we are to make a Judgment of, there is likewise Knowledg and Judgment, or *Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding*, to determine concerning our Spiritual Estate: As those of full Age *by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*. But that *communion of the holy ghost* which the Apostle prays might be with all

Phil. 1. 6.

Rom. 8. 23.

1 Cor. 2. 12, 13, 14, 15. Ephes. 4. 23.

Phil. 1. 9. Col. 1. 9.

Heb. 5. 14.

2 Cor. 13. 14. all the *Corinthians*, and so with all Believers, whereby he communicates to us all those good things which Christ hath obtained for us, is known only to those humble and circumspect Christians which love God, and give most of it by *keeping his Commandments*: John 16. 15. John 14. 23. that as it is the Blessing of the Lord that *makes rich*; *yet the hand of the diligent*: *the blessing of the Lord* going along with our diligence. So it is by the Spirit of God, that we know the things given to us of God; yet by giving all diligence, we make our Calling and Election sure; the Spirit of God both exciting us to, and assisting us in the exercise of Grace, and encouraging such diligence by Spiritual Comforts. Prov. 10. 4, 22. And as those that *do his will, shall know of the doctrine whether it was of God, or whether he spake of himself*. So they that know the Work which they find in themselves, whether it be from moral Principles, fleshly Wisdom, restraining Grace, or from renewing Grace, and so of those *things that accompany Salvation*. John 7. 17. Heb. 6. 9.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THAT I may do something towards the helping of Christians in the trial of their Spiritual state, I will first premise some general Observations.

1st, Some persons may have much advantage of others before their Conversion, as by reason of Natural Temper, Fleshly Wisdom, Education, Restraining Grace, or other things which keep them from the Polutions of the World, and bring them to a form of Godliness. Now it will be harder for such to judge of their Spiritual state, than for others. Sometimes the Nights are light by reason of the Moon shining; and it is not so easy then to discern whether it be Day: Yea, if the fore-part of the Night be dark, and the Moon rise before morning, a man may think it Day before it is so: and having found his error, he may (that he may not be deceived again) be backward to believe that it is Day, when it is really so. In like manner some may (as I said) be free from the more gross Follies and Vanities of Youth; others may have been Profane and Wicked in their Younger Years; but through some Affliction, or

some special Providence of God, or happening into some Religious Family, or into some place where the Word of God is Zealously and Faithfully Preached, their Consciences are awakened, and they leave those sins which formerly they lived in, and there is a great change wrought in them, but not a saving change: this is but as the light of the Moon before Day; hereby they may be deceived into a false opinion of their own state; and when they come to see their own mistake, may be more backward to believe a real thorough change in themselves when it is wrought. There have been those that have dated their Conversion after they have not only done much, but suffered much in the service of Christ.

2*dly*, It may so happen, that persons may at some times seem better or worse than they are. We are upbraided by some for painting Hypocrites, or shewing what they may attain to, so as to represent them better than we can ordinarily find sincere Christians to be. And on the other hand in speaking of the Infirmities of the Saints, we make them worse than most Hypocrites. But as the Wise-man complains of it as a vanity upon the Earth, that there be just men to whom it happens according to the work

work of the wicked, and wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous; So it is in their Morals; Eccles. 8. 14.
if we read 2 *Sam.* 11. we should judge (looking no further) that *David* was a grievous Apostate, considering what profession he had before made, which we may easily see in the 34. and 63. *Psalms*, and that he had now flung away care, that there was no fear of God before his eyes: but we see afterwards by the 51. *Psalm*, that the root of the matter was in him, and his Grace did again flourish. We have other instances in Scripture, as *Asa*, *Peter*, 2 *Chron.* 16. *Matt.* 26. 70, 74. And on the other hand, we see what account *Paul* gives of himself, Tho he was then *in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity*, and reckoned that he was *chief of sinners*. Phil. 3. 5, 6.
So that in judging our selves or others, we must use much caution, and have respect not to our present frame or practice as it may be at some times, but to what is the ordinary habitual frame of our hearts, or course of our lives. Gold may sometimes be so sullied with rust and dust, as it may look worse than Copper doth ordinarily; and on the other hand, Copper may be so burnished and embellished, that it may look

more bright, and give a greater lustre than most Gold doth. So that there is required both judgment and attention of mind, to distinguish the one from the other.

3*dly*, We must have respect to natural temper in judging our selves or others. As it is said, A little Sugar will serve for sweet Wine; and a little Grace makes much more shew in some than in others: it is true, all are defiled with original sin. But whether there be, as the Philosopher says, a certain Genius (as I may speak) or disposition to virtue, or rather something like virtue, some mens natural temper is quick, and soon moved; others are as Doves or Lambs in their natural temper; but meekness in these Creatures not being from choice and judgment, is no virtue in them. In judging our selves, we must consider how Grace falls in with Nature, or how it strives against it: a gentle gale with the Tide or Stream, may make good riddance: but it must be a brisk gale to carry a Vessel against them. One undertaking to tell what mens natural temper was, by his skill in Physiognomy, he being asked what he thought of a certain person, said he was of a very ill temper, and natural disposition: those present, derided him

for

for being so mistaken in his conjecture, they looking upon him as a person of such an excellent temper. But he himself did vindicate the man, and told them he had judged right; for his natural temper was very bad, but he had corrected it by Philosophy. Now there might be more of moral vertue in him, than in *Vespasian*, who for the sweetness of his Nature, was called the Darling of mankind. A little Grace will make a great shew in some Natures, when a far greater measure will make but a little shew in others, where it hath no help from Nature.

2. We must consider the circumstances wherein persons are; what are their temptations on one hand, and their advantages on the other hand. Some enjoy more health than others, when it is not because they have stronger bodies, or are of a more hail constitution; but it is by reason of their circumstances; one can command his business, and that he goes out only at seasonable times, or he is so accommodated as to secure himself against the injury of the weather; they work only so as may be for their health, and need not tire themselves, or over-heat themselves: they have wholsome Diet, and they have Cordials by them, to relieve

or fortify Nature when it is too hard put to it. And by these means, those who are more weakly, prevent sickness, whereas others (tho they be naturally stronger) are forced to be out at all hours, in all weathers, to endure heats and colds, eat and drink what they can get, have little wholesome diet, if they ayl any thing, have no Cordials or Remedies at hand to help themselves. So it is with men in respect of their Souls; some have a competent Estate, and are put neither upon the temptations of adversity, nor prosperity; while others (through straits in their Estates,) are put upon mean things, and sometimes upon sinful shifts, and others are rich, and in great places, and others are hardly able to judge of their temptations, how hard it is to be high in the World, and not high minded; to exercise sobriety and temperance in plenty and abundance. Some have little to do in the World, abroad or at home, in trading or in their families, have few to deal with, few Children or Servants; others must go into all companies, converse with all sorts of persons, meet with provocations from some, temptations from others to comply with their sinful humours for their own advantage, they

may

may have unfaithful Servants, unduti-
ful Children, and so more trial of their
Grace, more exercise for it, and so may
discover some weakness of Grace, tho
not the want of it. So some may have
the advantage of good conversation, may
live in good Families or Neighbour-
hoods, where they have good examples
to provoke them to love and to good
works, and are oft called upon and ad-
monished if they fail in any thing: they
may live under a lively Ministry, whose
Sermons may be *as nails to fasten*, *as*
goads to excite or quicken; they may
have good books to read, and time and
opportunity to read them, which is a
great help to Christians: whereas on
the other hand, some persons are cast
into prophane places, or Families, or
company, where they meet with those
that will be drawing and enticing them
to sin, scoffing at them, threatning, dis-
couraging them; and it may be such as
they have some dependance upon: they
seldome hear an awaking Sermon, or
sound doctrine, such as may breed good
nourishment; or such discourse as *may*
minister grace to the hearers; seldom meet
with a good book, or it may be if they
do, cannot read it. It is true, we must
hold fast Christ's Name, and not deny his
Faith, even *where Satan dwells*, *and both*
him

Eccles. 12. 11.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Ephes. 4. 29.

Rev. 2. 13. his seat. But we cannot expect that Grace should thrive much under such Discouragements and Disadvantages.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall proceed yet further, to shew how Christians that are sincere may be distinguished from others, tho they have their sinful Infirmities. We sometimes observe Persons of Good Families reduced to straits, and go meanly; but yet, if they come to beg at our Doors, if we meet them in Company, we see something in them which bewrays or discovers what they are, either in their Gesture, Speech, Civility. So those that are born of God, it may be in their Walk or appearance fall far below their Rank; they may have sinful Infirmities; they may find Evil present with them when they would do good; they may be led Captive to the Law of Sin which is in their Members; they may not do the Good which they would, but the Evil which they would not; but yet the Spirit lusts against the Flesh, they hate the Evil which they do; they would do the Good which they do not; they bewail their Bondage to Sin; long to be delivered from the Body of Death, and

Rom. 7. 15, &c.

are

are thankful that they are so far delivered from it by Jesus Christ. These things, I confess, discover our Spiritual State chiefly to our selves, but it is that which I would help Christians in. Again, you may observe a difference betwixt Persons that are nice and neat in their Nature and Temper, and those that take care only to make a good shew. The former would not only appear neat outwardly, but they are uneasie if they have any thing about them which is not neat and cleanly. Again, tho' they may think themselves more obliged to go according to their Rank when they are Abroad, or in Company, yet you shall never surprize them in any sordid or unhandsome Dress. The latter care not what they wear, so they have something that is fine to cast over all. Their Natures will bear sordidness and nastiness, if they can hide it; and if they can appear Fine abroad, care not what they wear at home. So sincere Christians *take heed to their spirits*, and pray daily that God would *create in them a clean heart, and renew in them a right spirit*. Their *secret sins* are a trouble and burden to them. They would especially *let their light shine so before men, that seeing their good works, they may glorify their father which is in heaven*. But yet

Matth. 2. 15. Psalm 51. 10. Psalm 19. 12. Matth. 5. 16.

yet they will walk in the midst of their Houses with a perfect heart, carry themselves amongst Servants and Children, as remembring that they are under the eye of God, and should be Examples of Holiness to those under their own Charge. Whereas others are like *painted Tombs*, and *whited Sepulchres*, *which within are full of rottenness and dead mens bones*. So they put on their best Dress when they go out, that they may make a fair shew before others; but surprize them at home, when they do not study their Carriage, and they are quite other manner of Persons, and care not how they appear in their own Families before their Servants and Children. Again, We may observe, That some Persons have *Tertian* or *Quartan* Agues; on the intermitting days they are ordinarily as well as other Persons; but we must not therefore conclude when we see them well, that they have lost their Ague, or are cured; for when the Fit day comes, they are as bad again as ever; yet he that is cured, may once in a long time, perhaps on occasion (if he have some way neglected or disordered himself) have some remembrance of his Ague (as we speak) in a Fit and away. So in this case we sometimes see

Psal 101. 2.
Matth. 23. 27.
Luke 11. 44.

see Persons abstain from Sin, and carry themselves very well for some time together; but this is only an Intermission, they have been kept from Temptations or Occasions of Sin; but when they meet with an Occasion or Temptation, they are the same Persons that they were, and so *toties quoties* (as we say) as oft as they meet with occasion, they fall again into Sin; these are not cured; but those that are freed from their Disease, may perhaps at some time be overtaken with Sin, and we cannot determine how oft; but if the general tenor of their Lives be as becomes the Gospel, tho they do Sin, they *have an Advocate with the Father.* 1 John 2. 1.

CHAP. VII.

I Will now shew you some Characters whereby you may make some Judgment of your Spiritual State. And amongst many which others lay down, I shall insist only on some few, which are most easy to be discerned in our selves. I never study to speak (I will not say, all that may be said, but) all that I can say on any Subject, remembring that of the Orator, *Doctis est electio & modus*; for tho I reckon not my self among

Learned

Learned men, yet I would follow them at a distance. And,

1. Observe what it is that you are chiefly guided by in the general course of your Life. What we chiefly mind, doth influence us in all the passages of our Lives: *And they that are after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh; and they that* Rom. 8. 5. *are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* That is, those in a Natural state chiefly mind, that is, savour and relish, set their affections on, are taken up in the pursuit of carnal things. This same word is used, *Matth.* 16. 23. *Phil.* 3. 19. *Col.* 3. 2. So those *that are born of* John 3. 5. *the spirit, walk after the spirit*; are led Rom. 8. 1. by the Spirit, Savour, and relish, set their Affections on, seek after Spiritual things. Now let us examine what it is that doth chiefly influence us in the several turnings of our lives. We consider what will stand with, what will chiefly further that which is our great concernment, not what should be so, but what we really make so. In chusing Callings or Imployments, Relations, Places of abode, let us consider what we look chiefly at, what sways us most therein, whether we chuse such a Calling, or way of Life, which will most advance us in the World, wherein we are most like to get great Estates, to

live

live at Ease, in Pleasure; or whether in our choice we consider rather what will most help us, or least hinder us in the way to Heaven; where we are like to meet with fewest Temptations. I deny not, but we may consider how to live; so as we may be in a capacity *to give rather than to receive*; *That we may walk honestly towards them that are without, having lack of nothing: but may pay every man their own, and be burdensome to no man.* But that which we should and shall seek in the first place, if our hearts be right within us, *is the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* Not for worldly advantage, chusing for our selves, or ours, such Imployments or Callings as may take up our time, so that we cannot *wait upon the Lord without distraction*; or which may cast us upon Temptations to excess, man-pleasing, or other like Sins, which may deprive us of the benefit of the Ordinances of God, and force us to live amongst Idolaters or Heathens. If any say, some must follow such Callings; leave them to such as mind earthly things, and to govern themselves thereby. So it is in chusing Relations; Let Persons deal plainly and faithfully with themselves, and they may know what it is that makes Matches for them, by their choice therein:

Acts 20. 35. 1 Thes. 4. 12.

Matth. 6. 33.

1 Cor. 7. 35.

therein: We may see (to allude to the
Joshua 24. 15. words of *Joshua*) *whom they chuse to serve*. Whether their God is their Belly, and they chuse to live at Ease, and in Pleasure; whether they be covetous Idolaters, and look chiefly after great Estates; whether they do as those that
Luke 14. 7. *chuse chief rooms at feasts*; Crowding to get as high as they can, to get as near as may be towards the upper end of the World. I allow it to be not only lawful, but prudent, for Persons (so far as they can) to match within their own Rank; But as our Saviour saith in another case, *These things ought ye to have*
Matth. 23. 23. *done, and not to leave the other undone*. God in Judgment oft leaves Persons to their own choice; so that they that will be rich, shall be so; and those that seek Glory from men, shall have it. But where Men or Women set their Faces stedfastly to go to Heaven (to allude to those words, *Luke* 9. 51.) they will consider what help or encouragement they shall meet with in the way thither; Considering what the Apostle
1 Cor. 7. 39. means by *marrying only in the Lord*; with one that is going the same way with us, whose Examples, Counsels, Prayers, we may have the help of, and with whom we may walk hand in hand to
1 Peter 3. 7. Heaven, *as being heirs together of the same*

grace.

grace of life. So in chusing Services, what is it that you chiefly propound to your selves? Those that are most intent on profit, will inquire what Wages, what Vails, what Way of improving what they have, what Work for wearing and tearing their Cloaths: If Persons chiefly mind their Ease and Pleasure, their enquiry is what House they keep, what work they hold their Servants to, what liberty they give, what worthy Company there is in the Family, or in the Neighbourhood. But those that mind heavenly things, will consider what help or furtherance they may have therein, whether God be served or worshipped in the Family, what Ministry or Means of Grace they shall live under, what Servants or Neighbours there are, by whose Conversation they may gain any Spiritual Advantage, or be furthered in the way to Heaven. If we will commune with our own hearts about these things, and deal plainly with ourselves, we shall easily see what is the bent and inclination of our minds.

2. Observe how you stand affected in hearing the word; many may take delight therein, but there is no certain judgment to be made of persons thereby. There are several Herbs or Plants in the same field, yea, several parts of the

the same plant or herb, which several Creatures of different kinds may delight in, or feed on; there are several Sermons, yea, several parts of the same Sermon, which divers persons may be taken with. The Sheep perhaps feeds only on the tender leaf; the Horse may perhaps eat the stalks with it; the Swine may feed on the root; the Bee on the flowers, the Bird on the seed: so in hearing the word, some persons may be pleased with flashes of wit, and flights of fancy; some with strength of Reason, subtilty of Argument, depth of Judgment; some with Histories or Antiquities, some with Satyr or Invectives against those that they are at variance with; But others desire rather *the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby*; The plain truths of the Gospel, which may further them in the way to Heaven; such things as may best discover their spiritual state to them, that they may not be deceived in a matter of so great moment; such things as will awaken him out of his drowsiness and security, as will direct him in the way wherein he should go; as will *strengthen in him those things which are remaining in him, and ready to die*; strengthen our faith, quicken our affections to heavenly things, build us up on our most holy faith. Some that

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Rev. 3. 2.

have

have good appetites, may love to have their meat well dreſſed, and ſerved handſomely in, but they can eat good meat without ſawce, and prefer the meat to the ſawce, or a ſubſtantial diſh to new-fangled diſhes, which are rather for ſhew and pleaſing the pallate, than for nouriſhment. Some may love to have their ſpiritual food brought to them, or conveyed to them in good and proper language, who yet may more mind things than words, and the matter rather than the manner of delivery. God is pleaſed ſometimes ſo far to condeſcend to mens Temper and Genius, as to convey the ſaving truths of the Goſpel to their hearts in ſuch words as are pleaſing and delightful to them; as Phyſicians convey their Medicines to the Stomach in ſome vehicle that may be grateful to it. So *Auſtin* was a great Orator, and one that taught Rhetorick; and *Ambroſe* being an eloquent Preacher, he was much delighted with his preaching, and it pleaſed God by thoſe words which he chiefly minded, to inſinuate into him thoſe things which before he minded not. He was very much pleaſed with *Tully's* Works, and (as *Petitus* prefer'd *Pindar's* Odes before *David's* Pſalms, ſo he) preferred his Style to that of the Scripture; when he firſt began to read them;

them, but afterwards he blamed himself for it; and when he read his *Hypotyposis*, which before he had been pleased with above the rest of his Works, he disliked it, because he found not the Name of Christ there. *Mr. Robert Bolton* having heard the Fame of *Mr. Perkins*, going at a Commencement to *Cambridge*, went to hear him preach, and having heard him, he said, he was a passing mean Scholar, and a barren empty fellow: but when God changed his heart, he changed his opinion of *Mr. Perkins*, accounting him as learned and godly a Divine as this Church had for many years enjoyed, considering his age; for he was born and died in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*. It is said of him, That he taught *England* to preach; and a learned Prelate gives this Testimony of him, that he excelled in a distinct Judgment, and a rare dexterity in clearing the obscure subtilties of the School, and easy explication of the most perplexed Discourses. A sick person that desires Cure and Health, is not so much for a learned and ingenious Physician; that is good company, and one that will discourse aptly and pertinently on any Subject; but he is for a skilful and faithful Physician that understands his disease, and will apply proper Remedies,

and

and such Physick as will rather work effectually, than please his Taste, or not make him sick. We value or chuse things according to the tendency which they have to the end which we aim at, or propound to our selves. So men heap up to themselves teachers after their own lusts, such as may please or gratify their corrupt inclinations. As if men be addicted to Debauchery or Drunkenness; he that will prophesy of wine and strong drink, shall be the prophet of such a people; he that will encourage him in his wickedness. So on the other hand, If a man seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness in the first place, or above all other things, he is for such an one, and for such preaching as will direct and help him in the way thither.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Mic. 2. 11.

3. Let us examine what it is that we chiefly desire of God in our Prayers; this will discover much of the bent and inclination of our hearts, and what it is that we chiefly mind. I speak not of the Prayers which we utter in the publick Congregation, or in our Families, or before others on any occasion; in which cases persons do not always utter their own desires, but many times desire such things as may express the desires of those with whom they pray, or the desires which they know in their own

own Consciences they and others ought to have: but many times men pray for ostentation, or for a pretence, to shew their talent in expressing themselves, or to seem more religious than they are: but those Prayers whereby we may make a judgment of our selves, are the prayers which we pour out to God in secret, not by rote or by book, but from the bottom of our hearts, which we may know by dealing faithfully with our selves. Men indeed ask for such things as they are convinc'd they ought to pray for, or as they have accustom'd themselves to pray for, or which they have learned to pray for by hearing good Men pray, or out of good Books; it may be out of the Lord's Prayer: but these are not their real desires, and they would not be willing to be taken at their word, to walk so strictly as they pray that they may walk, to do the Will of God on Earth as it is done in Heaven; to have their sins forgiven only as they forgive others: But what are our real *requests which we make known to God*, which our hearts do sincerely concur with; or what are those requests uttered by others with whom we join in prayer, that our hearts do close with, and which we add our hearty Amen to? It is but a word of course with many,

Phil. 4. 6.

and

and they deal with themſelves as men deal many times with others, ſetting their hand to petitions which they never gave their conſent to: but what are the petitions which we really own, and would gladly have anſwered? Are they for *Solomon*'s Leavings, Riches, long Life, the Lives of our Enemies? Are they ſuch as the Sons of *Zebedee* asked, Honours and Preferments? or rather ſuch as *Solomon*'s petition was, for Wiſdom, not to govern a Kingdom, but to get a Kingdom? *to make us wiſe to Salvation*, to rule our own ſpirits? that he would lift upon us the light of his Countenance; that our *hearts may be found in his Statutes?* do we turn *precepts* as well as promiſes into Prayers? deſiring that God would direct or incline our hearts to what he requires us? Do we pray rather for the fruit, or a ſanctified uſe of Affliction, than deliverance from it? that tho we cannot *walk in the light of God's Countenance*, yet we may walk by the light of his Word; that though we may not with *John*, *lie in Chriſt's boſom*, yet we may with *Mary*, *ſit down at his feet to hear his word, fearing the Lord, and obeying the voice of his ſervants*; tho we *walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light*, have nothing of comfort.

Matth. 20. 21.
2 Tim. 3. 15.
Prov. 16. 32.
Pſal. 4. 7.
Pſal. 119. 80.
Pſal. 119. 4.5.
Heb. 12. 11.
Pſalm 89. 15.
Pſalm 119. 10.
Jo. 13. 23.
Luc. 10. 39.
Iſ 50. 10.

4. Let

4. Let us examine our selves by our company. Here the rule holds, *Noscitur ex socio*, &c. If we know not what a man is, we may give a near guess by his company; if a stranger come among us, we may conjecture at his religion, tho we never come near him, by the company that he chuses, and ordinarily associates himself with. It is true, it may be our unhappy lot to be cast among such whose society may be forbidden to us, and we may be necessitated by our worldly occasions to keep company with prophane and wicked persons: But who are they in whose company we chiefly delight, or whom we chuse to make our familiar friends and companions? all *David's delight was in the Saints*, those he accounted the most excellent persons. *He was a companion of those that feared God, and turned feet to turn to him*; they are such that the sincere Christian makes choice of as his bosome friends, not only as they are dear to God; *and so loving him who begat, he loves him that is begotten of him*, and would *shew kindness to such for his sake*, as *David* shewed *kindness to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake*. But like will to like. It is natural in brute Creatures; and persons are in their element when they are conversing with those like

Psa. 120. 5.

1 Cor. 5. 10.

Psal. 16. 3.

Psal. 119. 63, 79.

1 Jo. 5. 1.

2 Sam. 9. 1. 7.

like themselves. we may observe ordinarily, at any publick meetings where there are several sorts of persons, who they are that get together, and how they sort or divide themselves. If there be Scholars or Learned Men, they will be together; Husbandmen will associate together; so Merchants or other Trades-men: not only as they can best bear a part in such discourse as persons of their own way have together, and use, as the Apostle saith in another case, *Exhortation* to each other; but they relish such discourse as is of things in their own element, as we speak: and which is more, they may get a further insight into their own Calling or Business, by the experience of others which they communicate to them; so it is with Christians, when they meet with those that speak of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; It is like one fallen into the company of those that speak their own Language, or Discourse of matters belonging to their own calling; we may gain experience by conversing with such. As the Apostle *longed to see Rome, that he might not only impart some spiritual gift to them, but that he might be comforted together with them, by their mutual faith.* Christians may be helpful to others that are far above them

Rom. 1. 11, 12.

in

in gifts and knowledge; as *Junius* saith of himself in his own Life, tho he was a means of increasing the knowledge of an honest Countryman that he accidentally met with, yet the Countryman was a means of inflaming his Zeal; he speaking with such feeling and such a savoury relish of the matters of Religion, as made him think there was something yet further in Christianity than he had attained to; so that Christians sharpen each other by their mutual converse, *as Iron sharpens Iron. David* would tell others *what God had done for his Soul; and the humble*, (those that were brought low by affliction, and not too proud to learn) *should hear thereof, and be glad*, that there had been others in like condition with themselves, and yet had found mercy and help; yea, they should say, *This poor man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his trouble.* They should not consider him as a King, as a Prophet, as a man after God's own heart, for the eminency of Grace; but as a poor man seeking shelter among strangers, and (which is worse) using such poor mean shifts as he did; debasing himself so far below that Courage and Faith which he had at other times: for this Psalm was composed upon *his changing his behaviour before* Abimelech, when

Prov. 2.7. 17.
Psalm 66. 16.
Psal. 34.2.
V. 6.
1 Sam. 21. 11, &c.

when he drove him away, and he departed; the story of which we have 1 Sam. 21. 11, &c. on such grounds a godly man will chuse such for his necessaries, his near or familiar friends.

These are the few things amongst many, about which I would have Christians to examine themselves, that they may be the better able to make a judgment concerning their Spiritual State, and to take the comfort of their Christian Privileges, especially in times of trouble, and when we approach towards our latter end.

CHAP. VIII.

FAith is yet a great help against Trouble, as we thereby have the comfort and benefit of the Promises of God, which are so *exceeding great and precious.* 2 Pet. 1. 4.

It is a great thing for God to oblige himself to us by promise, as *Austin* saith, Confes. L. 5. c. 9. *Thou art pleased, because thy Mercy endures for ever, to become a Debtor by thy promises, to those to whom thou hast forgiven all their Debts.* We love to be free and disengaged, and would have others stand to our courtesy for that which we intend to give them: but

we would not give them that advantage against us to challenge us upon our word. But it hath pleased God for our more abundant consolation so far to condescend to poor sinners, that we may, as *Austin* saith (in the place before cited) of his Mother, urge upon him his own hand-writing, or plead as *David*, *Remember thy word to thy servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope.* For we make him a lyar if we do not trust his promise.

Psal. 119. 49.

1 Jo. 5. 10.

2. The promises of God are exceeding great and precious in respect of the *matter* of them: he having promised so many and so great things which we should not have had the confidence to ask or think, if he had not encouraged us by such promises. And as there are in Physick some *Catholick* remedies, and some particular Medicines for particular Diseases; so there are some *general* comprehensive promises, as that great promise in which all the promises of the life that now is, and that which is to come are summed up, That God will be our God, or that he will be a God to us. So that promise which occurs so oft in Scripture, that God will be with us: Which is not to be with us as he is *in all places*, or so as to be an unconcerned Spectator of what befalls us, but

1 Chr. 17. 24.

Heb. 8. 10.

Jer 23. 24.

tur so as to deal well with us, as *Jacob* expounds it, as we shall see by comparing *Gen.* 31. 3. with *Gen.* 32, 9. So there are some promises wherein several things are put together as many ingredients into one Cordial: such is that promise, *that God will be a Sun and Shield, that he will give grace and glory, and will withhold no good thing from such as walk uprightly.* This promise comprehends all the good things of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. And I know not but the Apostle may have particular respect to this promise, there being a promise of things Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal; of Comfort, Direction, Protection, Provision. But there are *particular* promises suited to the several conditions of Christians, which are by some reduced to several heads, and by others summed together in the order wherein they stand in Scripture. So that whatever circumstances we are in, we may find promises suited thereto. And as they are exceeding great and precious in respect of the *fulness*, and great *variety* of them; so they are precious in respect of the *truth and certainty* of them. This is it that makes other promises from men of so little value, that every man is a lyar. *David* indeed spake that rashly, and it may be therein might have respect to the promises

Ps. 84. 11.

1 Tim. 4. 8

Phil. 3. 15.

miſes which were made to him from God by *Samuel* or *Nathan*, as under temptation he ſaid he ſhould *one day perish by the hand of Saul*, and then the promiſe would have failed. But he did more delibcrately ſay, *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye*, deceiving others either through weakneſs or wickedneſs; either not being able to make good what they have unadviſedly promiſed, or willingly flattering them into vain expectations of what they never intended to do for them. But theſe are *promiſes of God that cannot lye*. As he is *faithful that hath promiſed*, ſo he is able alſo to perform; and tho we are ready to ſay ſometimes *doth his promiſe fail for evermore?* we do either through ignorance miſtake the meaning of them, as the Jews of Old, and many ſtill are ready to expound many promiſes too rigidly according to the letter: or we are ready to underſtand thoſe things abſolutely, which are to be underſtood with that limitation ſo far as they are for our good which we are not always competent judges of; or we are too quick and impatient of delays: the viſion is for an appointed time; and the things which *God hath promiſed ſhall in ſeaſon*.

1. Sam. 27. 1.
Pſal. 62. 9.
Tit. 1. 2.
Heb. 11. 11.
Rom. 4. 2.
Pſal. 77. 8.
Pſal. 34. 10 84. 11.
Eccleſ. 6. 12.
Hab. 2. 4.
Luk. 1. 20.

I will

I will now shew you how by Faith we have the comfort and benefit of these promises.

1. By Faith we have an interest in the promises. We read of the *covenants of promise*, whereby we may either understand the promises of the Covenant, there being the like *Hypallage* oft found in Scripture; as by the *Law of righteousness*, is meant *the righteousness of the Law*. *And the Nations of those that shall be saved, are those that shall be saved of the Nations.* And it may be called the Covenants, because tho it be one in the substance of it, yet it is diverse in respect of its administration; on which account it is called both Old and New. Or it is called the Covenants of promise, as being founded on, and consisting in promises. In Scripture we find promises frequently called Covenants, Covenants consisting of mutual promises or engagements: and where the promise on one side only is expressed, the engagement on the other side is ordinarily implied. Now there is no case wherein the words *Promise* and *Covenant* may with more reason be used promiscuously than in this case in hand, and so they are used by the Apostle; for tho this Covenant be not an absolute promise, there being some

Eph. 2. 12. Rom. 9. 31. Rev. 21. 24. Heb. 8. 13. Gen 6. 18. 2 Chron. 7. 18. Ezr. 10. 3. Neh 9. 38. Gal. 3. 17. 22.

thing to be done by the Mediator of it for the confirmation thereof, as likewise by us for partaking of the benefit of it: yet it is *ordered in all things and sure*; and not suspended on any uncertain condition, depending on our fluctuating will; but what is required on our part is likewise promised to be wrought in us. So that as there are promises *to conditions*, which I may speak without the offence of those that understand what is ordinarily or properly meant by a condition; so there are promises *of those conditions*. Now this promise or Covenant *by faith of Jesus Christ, is given to them that believe*; Faith intitling us to the grand promise, whereof all the rest are branches: all these being *yea and amen, faithful and true in Jesus Christ*; who as Mediator of the Covenant, died for the confirmation of it. For the further clearing of this matter, we must know, that many of the promises in Scripture were made to particular persons, and on some special occasion: yet we must not look upon such things as the rules of those persons only (as some call them) that do not concern others: for what is put into the Canon of Scripture, is there left on Record for our Instruction and Comfort. So that we shall find the things therein spoken, applied to such

2 Sam. 23. 5.
Jer. 31. 33.
John 6. 37.
Eph. 2. 8.
Gal. 3. 22.
2 Cor. 1. 20.
Dan. 9. 27.
Rom. 15. 4.

as

as lived many Hundred years after, as if they had been directed particularly to them. So the Prophet saith, that God spake *with them*, that which he spake to *Jacob* in *Bethel*, so many Hundred year before. And that which was spoken to *Moses* is said to be *spoken* to the *Jews* in Christ's time; and what was spoken in *Solomons* time is applied to the *Hebrews* in the Apostles time. And so the promise that was made to *Joshua* upon a particular occasion, is applied to the *Hebrews*, tho in another case; God being always the same and bearing the same love to his People, and so is with them as I said before, to deal well with them, and to do for them as the matter requires. And tho we cannot expect, that God should deal with us in every respect according to his promise made to others, yet we may take encouragement from thence to hope that he will deal proportionably with us. Ministers of the Gospel cannot expect that God should enable them to work Miracles, because of what he promised to the Apostles when he sent them forth; or that he should secure them from the assaults of wicked men, because of what he promised to *Paul* at *Corinth*. But we may thence conclude, that his grace shall be sufficient for us; that we shall have help and assistance from him

Hos. 12. 4.
Exod. 3. 6. Matt. 22. 31.
Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 5.
Jos. 1. 5.
Mark. 16. 17.
Acts 18. 10.

according to the work which he calls us to; and that where he hath any persons to save, he will find ways and means for the effecting of it, and that he *will work* so as none shall let. Again, there are promises made to persons under some particular circumstances, as to the Fatherless and Widows, to the Poor and Needy, to the Sick, to those that suffer for Righteousness sake, and we may not be concerned in promises made to such. Now it is in this case, as in those commands that are given to several relations. Tho such commands concern us not at present, as they cannot all reach to all; yet as any come into such relations, they come under the obligation of such commands. So as any come into such circumstances, they come under the influence of such promises as are made to persons in them. We read, it may be, Books of Physick, or Surgery, and there meet with receipts or remedies which we have no need of: let us make use of those which we have need of, and thank God that we are free from so many Diseases, as we perceive by such Books poor mortals are subjects to: and that there are such remedies in readiness, in case we should need them. So when we read such variety of promises

Acts 26. 22.

Isa. 43. 13.

Eph. 5. 22, &c.

mises in Scripture, let us bless God that we are exempted from so many troubles as are there provided against; that there are such promises laid in for such as do want them, and that they are there in readiness for us, if we should be reduced to such a condition. Some promises are made to persons under some particular *character or qualification*, as to the meek, the humble, to those that fear God, or love him; to those that trust in him, to the upright in heart, or of an upright conversation. But all these are several Characters of the same persons; grace being as leven that leaveneth the whole lump; tho some grace may appear more eminently in one than in another, and some more eminently than another in the same person, as they meet or fall in with their natural temper or inclination. For when these meet they are as Wind and Tide meeting together; or they are described by those graces which considering their circumstances or temptations they have most occasion for the exercise of, and therefore they may appear most eminently in them; and so such promises may be made to such persons as are most suitable to them, or proper for them in the circumstances wherein at present they are; and as I said in the former case, are

1 Thes. 5. 23.

hear, &c. we should believe and be saved. We see further how much it is in man's power to bend his mind to the study of any particular subject: we see it plainly not only in men studying in general the study of Law, Physick, or Divinity; but those that addict themselves to the study of Divinity, chuse any particular point thereof to treat on. And they who give not the least ground of hope, that there is any saving work upon their own souls, will press upon others such things as the consideration of, may incline and dispose them to believing; and men have the same natural power to teach themselves, which they have to *teach others*. But all this will not reach to conversion any farther than God is pleased to give to every one.

Ezek. 18. 14, 28. Psal. 119. 59. Rom. 2 25.

I will now shew you what God doth towards the conversion of sinners, or which may have a tendency thereto; Some things he doth by his Providence, which he makes many times subservient to his Grace. He that *determines the bounds of mens habitation*, casts them into such places where they may hear the Gospel preached plainly, seriously, by such as *persuade men*, as knowing the terror of the Lord. And he may exercise them under some affliction, which

Acts 17. 26.

2 Cor. 5. 11.

may

may be as a ground-rain soaking to the roots, and softening the clods, and turning them to mold, that the seed that hath been long buried may spring up, of that which persons have a long time before heard, and never thought of after; when some humbling affliction befalls them, *they bethink themselves, and repent.* But such works fall short many times of true Conversion; and this *goodness proves but as the morning cloud, or early dew which passes away.* God doth something further by his common grace, restraining men from much evil. I confess I think our Saviour, where he speaks of the Spirit's reproving or convincing the World, understands the World of such whom he chose his Disciples out of, and distinguishes them from; but I think it is not intended of any inward working of the Spirit upon their hearts, but of those Miracles which he wrought, which confirmed the truth of Christ's Resurrection, and of his Doctrine. By such means as I have now mentioned, men may be brought near the Kingdom of Heaven, but never enter into it.

1 Kings 8. 47.

Hos. 6. 4. Gen. 20. 6. Jo. 16. 8.

But those preparations which Salvation doth follow upon, *are* (as the soberer Papists acknowledge) *wrought by Gods Grace and Spirit.* He enlightens the mind

Mark. 12. 34.

See Cassander's *consultation*, p. 45.

mind so as we have a more clear sight of Heavenly things, and other apprehensions of them than before we had when it pleases God to *reveal his Son* to us; he that before had no form nor comeliness in our eyes, nor any beauty that we should desire him, is now the chief of Ten thousands in our account, and *altogether lovely*. God draws us to Christ by teaching: tho I do not think that all the efficacy of God's Grace consists in propounding things to the understanding, or in enlightening the understanding to conceive aright of them. But by a secret touch of his Spirit, he so effectually inclines our hearts to him, that we do in a sort *naturally mind spiritual things*: that is, freely, without constraint. This of the Spirit's enlightning the mind, is not a peculiar notion of *Enthusiasts*, but the commonly received Doctrine of sober Protestants. So Bishop *Pierson* on the Article of the Holy Ghost, in his Exposition of the Creed tells us, The work of the Spirit is double, external and general, or internal and particular: By the former he reveals the will of God to the whole Church, by the latter he illuminates the understanding of particular believers, that they may receive the truth; the Holy Ghost working in us an assent

Gal. 1. 16. Isa. 53. 2. Cant 5. 10. Jo. 6. 44, 45.

1. Kings 8. 57. Phil. 2. 20.

to

to that which is by the word propounded.

Again, God doth by his Spirit convince us spiritually of our state and condition; *and the word, which is the sword of the Spirit, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder between the Soul and the Spirit, the joynts and the marrow*; pricking sinners at *the heart*, so as it shall be as a Sword in their bones; and those sins which they went lightly under before (as *David* did under his) are now a heavy burden, too heavy for them. And these convictions hereupon as a barbed arrow, which while men endeavour to shake off, torment them more, and they shall not be able to put off the thoughts of their sins, but (as *David's*) they shall be *continually before them*; so that they shall have no rest in their spirits till they come to Christ.

Eph. 6.17. Heb. 4.12. Acts 2.37.

2 Sam. 21. Psal. 38.4.

Psal. 51.3.

But now doubts do ordinarily arise in the minds of Christians, whether they be rightly humbled; whether they be sufficiently humbled; whether they have been long enough under these preparations.

They are ready to suspect that their trouble for sin is not kindly, that it is rather from self-love, and fear of punishments, than from love to God, and

and sense of the nature of sin, as it is against God, and displeasing to him.

Now to this I answer, That God hath placed our affections in the Soul as handles to take hold on it, and particularly, Fear: and he doth not only after conversion *put his fear into our hearts* (or at least continue it there) *that we may not depart from him*, but may thereby *depart from evil*; but he gave an intimidating threatning to man in the state of innocency, to be a means to keep him from sin. And at first conversion we ordinarily *flee from the wrath to come*; or to avoid that, *flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is set before us*.

Jer. 32. 40. Prov. 16. 6. Gen. 2. 17. Matt. 3. 7. Heb. 6. 18.

But there is a frequent exercise of Evangelical repentance after Conversion: when they espy a Tree in a storm, or in the heat, and betake themselves to it for shelter or shade: but when they come at it, they find fruit which they did not see at such a distance see, or in such a plight or trouble consider; but having found it, they are (at last) as much pleased with it, as with the covert or umbrage of it. So we *sit under the shadow of Christ with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste*. In Marriage, Estate and Conveniences of Life are first treated of, and conjugal love increases by society or converse; you have first been taken

Cant. 2. 3.

taken your selves to Christ, or desire to come to him to save you from Hell, but doth this (upon second thoughts) satisfy you? Can you content your selves herewith? or rather do you not desire that he would *bless you in turning you from your iniquities*, and say with *Paul, Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do?* It matters not so much what is our first motive to bring us to Christ, if it do not terminate our desires, when we have occasion and opportunity more fully to consider things. A man may address himself to a person at first on the account of her Portion, to pay his debts, and keep him out of Prison, and answer some other occasions; but upon further knowledge of her, when he is freed from his debts, and extricated out of his troubles, he finds those accomplishments and qualifications in her which are a more abundant satisfaction to him than all her Estate.

Acts 3.26. Acts 9.6.

For the fear of Christians that they have not been sufficiently humbled, and so that they should have the wounds of their consciences healed slightly, before they be sufficiently searched or drawn; I answer, It is true when persons have been throughly humbled for their sin, it may work in them a greater aversion from it, and a more fixed resolution against it. As when *Ephraim* had suffered much for their sin of Idolatry, *they would not say any more to the work of their hands, ye are my Gods*: but *would rather say, what have I to do any more with Idols?* and tho the *Jews* were much addicted to Idolatry, yet the destruction of their Temple and City by the *Caldeans*, and their Captivity in *Babylon*, did much reclaim them from it. Yea, God is pleased to deal variously with persons, either accord-

Hos. 14. 3, 8.

according as their former conversations have been; where mens sins have been notorious, God doth many times make their Repentance as notorious, or as the frame and temper of their hearts is: he that instructs the husbandman to use several means for getting out his Corn, as the nature of it requires, or as he threshed with more ease or difficulty; doth himself exercise persons under affliction as need requires, till he hath brought their uncircumcised hearts to be humbled, to accept of the punishment of their iniquity. And so in bringing Souls to Jesus Christ, he exercises them under different degrees of humiliation, as he sees their state to require; or as he intends for the future to deal with them: But those that have to do with troubled Souls, or such as are humbled under a sense of their sin, should take heed of tampering too much in keeping them down, lest they do as Physicians; who that they may throughly subdue a disease, bring their Patients so low, that they cannot recover their strength, and raise them up again: and let Christians themselves take heed, lest out of a mistaken modesty or humility, they think they can never be sufficiently humbled, and *so refuse to be comforted*. It is not for us to teach our Physician, or to prescribe to God how he should deal with us: I have heard of an Eminent Man, who (in a deep humility) desired that God would shew him his sin in its own colours; or let him see the deformity of it, that he might be yet more humbled for it; and God did shew it to him so as to make him go mourning to his grave. And I have likewise heard of a woman, that made the like request to God, thinking she could never be sufficiently humbled for her sin. But it pleased God

Isa. 28.26.

Levit 16. 41.

Psalm 77. 2.

to

to give her such a sight of her Sin, that (like *Heman*) *while she suffer'd his terrors, she was distracted*; and in that Condition killed her own Child. It is the end that determines the manner and measure of the means leading thereto. And that Humiliation and Conviction is sufficient, that makes us willing to forsake our Sin, and come to Christ. A kindly Sorrow and Trouble for Sin, may grow upon us (as I lately said) after Conversion, and Sense of Pardon.

Psalm 88. 15.

Jer. 31. 19. Ezek. 6. 63.

For the other doubt of Christians, that they have not been long enough under the pangs of the New Birth, (as they speak) and know not whether they may not be too forward to believe.

I answer, That if by believing, we mean *a persuasion or confidence that our sins are pardoned*; we may believe too soon. And Mr. *Marshall* (in the forementioned Treatise) notwithstanding all that he hath said of Assurance being Essential to Faith, acknowledges, That many must be taught to doubt whether their present State be good, and that it is Humility so to do; that we must find out the certainty and sincerity of our Faith and Obedience, by Self-examination, before we can have a well-grounded Assurance, that we are in a state of Grace and Salvation already; and that such an Assurance belongs to the reflect Act of Faith, and is not of the Essence of that Faith whereby we are justified and saved. But if by believing, we mean *coming to God by Jesus Christ*, we should *make haste and not delay to keep this command*, as well as others. We are not to think, that as the Queens of *Persia* were to be prepared *Six months with oyl of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and other things*, before they might

P. 172.

Psal. 119. 60. 1 John 3. 23. Esther 2. 12.

might be admitted to the King; so we must continue such a time under Humiliation and so long under Contrition, before we may presume to come to Christ. *For the (it is true) we should count the cost* of being his Disciples, for want of which many (as it is in the Parable of the Sower) are forward to hear the word with joy, and believe for a time, but afterwards fall away; yet it is not necessary that we suspend our believing till we have throughly weighed every thing. It is not in this case as in ordinary Marriages, where Persons should inform themselves well of every particular before they engage, because when once engaged it will be too late to repent, or to make a better choice. But it is herein, as if a Person had one propounded to her, that she must Marry, or be undone; and one who (they know) will put her upon nothing, or require nothing of her which she can justly except against, in whom there is nothing that she can dislike; there can be no danger or inconvenience in finishing such a Match, without further delay. So if there were any other Name whereby we could be saved; if Christ did put us upon any thing, or require any thing of us which Heaven will not countervail; or if he would not have us yet come to him, we might defer our believing. And the something is to be done (as I have said) to make us willing to come to Christ, yet there is no long time required for the Soul to continue in a State of Preparation; the whole Work hath been done at once, as we see in those that were converted at *Peter's* Sermons, in *Paul*, in the Jaylor: As Mr. *Charnock* doth ingeniously illustrate it: The preparation of the Subject is necessary, but

Luke 14. 28.
Matth. 13. 21.
Acts 2.
Acts 9.
Acts 16.
Vol. 2. 148.

but this preparation may be at the same time with the conveyance of the Divine Nature. As a warm Seal may both prepare the hard Wax, and convey the Image to it by one and the same touch.

CHAP. XI.

I Will finish all with a few words about the Necessity of Holiness, both for the allaying of those heats that are amongst some about it, and for preventing or removing the Prejudices of Men against it. There is no need of distinguishing betwixt the Necessity of Holiness or Obedience, to the beginning of our Justification, and to the Continuation of it, among those that (according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*) believe the Perseverance of the Saints, and that there is no Necessity of Justification. But there is a Necessity of Holiness in those that are justified; for tho we may be justified at first by such a Faith as is only in tendency to obedience, but wants time and opportunity to put it self forth; yet, where Faith is unfeigned (and only such Faith justifies) it will, as there is occasion and opportunity, *work by love*; so, *that when God doth justify in the name of Christ, he doth also sanctify by his spirit*; therefore *without Holiness none shall see God*; Yet we are not to think that Holiness is required on the same account with Faith, much less in co-ordination with the righteousness of Christ. I doubt it is a piece of ordinary Christian's Divinity, that the righteousness of Christ serves only as grains of allowance to make our righteousness current where it is too light. But

Gal. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Heb. 12. 14.

as Christ hath no sharers in his Mediation, so neither is there any thing needful to be added to his satisfaction; but we are acquitted only upon the account thereof; and whatever we do, serves not for so much as grains of allowance to make his satisfaction current with God for us.

But yet it is necessary upon other accounts, not only because God will insist on it, as a thing condecent to his Holiness, *who is of purer eyes than to behold evil*, but there is a natural *necessity of it as a means to the end*, which is to *glorify God*, *and enjoy him*. As when *Nebuchadnezzar* chose some of the Captivity to serve under him, he would not only have them well-favoured, and fed with the King's Meat and Wine, that they might appear sightly before the King, but had such chosen as had good Natural Abilities, and had them taught the Learning and Language of the *Caldeans*, that they might be fit to do him Service. So God doth not only delight in Holiness, but indeed without that, we are not fit to serve him; we are *unworthy vessels, but to every good work*, and we must be God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to those good Works which he hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. But it is likewise necessary, that we may *enjoy that happiness which he hath prepared for us*. He brings in the *Highways and Hedges*, the meanest and most unworthy to partake of his Glory. But if a King should invite those that are Sick, and that of some loathsome Disease, to eat at his Table; if he would of his Bounty and Goodness dispense with the smell and loathsomeness of their Disease; it would be no favour to them (in the Condition wherein they

Heb. 1. 13.

Dan. 1. 3, &c.

Tit. 1. 16.

Luke 14. 23.

they are) to sit at the King's Table, while their Sickness makes them nauseate every thing there, and the smell of Meat to be offensive to them: But it would be a favour indeed, to be first recovered from their Disease, that they might not be ashamed to appear in such a place, and that they might be able to relish their Meat and Drink. This is our case, as we are unfit to appear before God (in the state wherein we are) to whom our inner-man is as naked and open, as our outward-man is to men like our selves. So we are altogether uncapable of that Comfort and Happiness, which is to be found in the Presence of God, or of the foretasts of it, which he gives his People in this Life. Whatever Excellency there is in any thing, we must have a Sense or Faculty correspondent therewith, or else we cannot understand or enjoy any thing of it. There is a Beauty in a Rose, and in other Flowers, which those that have their sight may enjoy the pleasure of; but there is further a sweet smell, or fragrancy in them, which the sight intermeddles not with; and there must be another sense, of Smelling, to enjoy the pleasure thereof. So neither can we enjoy the pleasure of Wine without the sense of Tasting, or of Musick without the sense of Hearing. So likewise, if a man do not understand any thing of Learning, or have no Genius thereto, he cannot take any pleasure in reading Books, or in Academical Exercises, which are better than Wine and Musick to others. So, if a man be not sanctified or renewed after the Image of God, tho he would dispense with his Sin, and admit him to Heaven, he would say of it (as of the Service of God, *what a weariness is it*; he might be content Mal. 1. 13.

content to be there to be kept out of Hell, if here he might be content to be in a place where there is a Sermon, to be shelter'd from a storm. It was to no purpose for Amnon to go to *David's* Court, when nature was decayed in him that he could not enjoy any of the pleasures of it. 2 Sam. 19. 35.

If it be said, this doth not infer any necessity of Holiness here in this life; for God can in a moment at death fit us for Heaven, which is easily done, when we lay down the body, which is both a clog and a torment to the Soul, not only as it is the cause of sin, but as most of our sins are in order to provide for the body, or to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. I answer,

There is a necessity of Holiness here, hardly as there is such an inseparable connexion betwixt that and *Faith* which *without it is dead without works*; this purifies, this *overcomes the world*; and the Apostle spends a whole chapter in setting forth the virtue of it. Besides, it is the pleasure of God to form a people for himself, that they may in the world *shew forth his praise*; and hath redeemed us to be *a peculiar people to himself*, that we may serve him *in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life*: He would have our light shine so before men, *that they seeing our good works, may glorify our father which is in Heaven*: so that we do hereby keep up his Honour, and a Remembrance of him in the world. We have hereby likewise some prelibations or foretastes of future Glory, which (as I have already said) we are not capable of without Holiness; God would have some of the fruits of the Land of *Canaan* brought to the people in the Wilderness, that (seeing what goodly fruit Gal. 5. 6. Jam. 2. 24. Acts 15. 9. 1 John 5. 4. Heb. 11. Isa. 43. 21. Titus 2. 14. Luk. 1. 74, 75. Numb. 13. 23.

fruit it was, they might be the more encouraged to go to possess it, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers that they were to encounter with; and there is nothing that doth more raise our thoughts of future Glory, than the earnest that we have of it here; which we can no more understand without Holiness, than we can the sweetness and virtue of Wine by tasting without tasting: We have seen by likewise a more lively sense of the Goodness of God to us, in delivering us from the sinful state wherein we are by nature; than we could have, if we were perfected at once, as death, if a man be suddenly surprized with an Apoplexy, and immediately at once recovered from it, he hath not such a sense of the Mercy that he hath received therein, as one that is recovered by degrees from a Fever, or some other Disease, wherein he hath felt much of pain, sickness, weakness; and hath not only known what it was to be revived by Cordials, to be helped by Friends, to be eased by rest in his bed; but after his recovery he can reflect with pleasure upon his former condition when it is past, and more prize his present Ease and Health. So those who have with the Apostle groaned under a body of sin and death, will not only reflect with pleasure upon the supplies of God's Grace which they have had to strengthen them in that Spiritual conflict, and to fortify them against temptations: but will afterwards with more thankfulness acknowledge the goodness of God in giving them the victory through our Lord Jesus and bringing them into a state of perfection, where they shall be freed from all annoyance of sin and temptations, which they could never have so well understood had

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it not been for the experience which they had in that middle state, wherein they found such a conflict while they were under cure, and recovering by degrees. So that it is a great mistake in any, to think that holiness is not necessary, if we may be justified without it, or that justification is our great priviledge, and holiness a burden imposed upon us, which we must be content to submit to, in consideration of so great a favour as the pardon of our sins. Holiness is rather our honor and happiness, the present fruit of our being the servants of God here; and Christ doth not only save us from our sins in *delivering us from the wrath to come*; but *by blessing us in turning us from our iniquities*.

Rom. 6. 22.
1 Thes 1. 10.
Acts 3. 26.

Thus have I briefly touched several things which more Learned men have treated of with more clearness and acurateness: but I have not written to supply the defects of others, or to add to what they have done: but considering that this small Treatise might fall into the hands of some, to whom it may not happen to read larger and more learned Books, I have adventured to write something, which I hope may be of some use to them for the right understanding of the important truth therein handled: desiring my Readers candidly to interpret what hath been well intended, and to bear with that weakness which I am as ready to own as any can be to charge upon me.

FINIS.